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wax. If young bees can't produce wax fast enough, the colony takes comb from elsewhere, usually the unused outer frames, leaving huge holes that may or may not be repaired later, or they may chew up foundation to resolve the immediate crisis. Bees always have their priorities in order.

A honeyflow may last a day, several days, a week, or longer, depending on the nature of the blooming plant and on the weather. Here, bees take the pessimistic view, assuming that such prosperity can't last and they must make hay, or honey, while the sun shines. In this way they are philosophers, recognizing that good fortune is not to be trifled with but must be savored to the fullest while it lasts.



Bees, in their passionate pursuit of honey, led scientists to pose a question that baffled them: How is it that the honeybee is able to find nectar in the field, return to her hive, and direct other bees to share her discovery? By what extraordinary power of communication are they able to accomplish this feat? The answer was long in coming, but the mystery finally yielded to two forces: the invention of the observation hive with its glass walls, enabling investigators to watch bees go about their normal pursuits, and the keen perception of Karl von Frisch, a German professor of zoology who translated the language of the bees into what he called dances, winning for himself in the process the Nobel Prize.

For years it was known that bees had a method of communication, but it was not understood until von Frisch discovered that forager scouts report their finds to the colony through a series of movements which send others scurrying to collect the

treasure. This is considered one of the most astonishing achievements in all of nature, speaking an intelligence independent of instinct. The information conveyed in the dances is so precise that foragers are able to fly directly to the food source by the shortest route, even if it involves a detour, as if they had a road map.

The food dances have the same intensity and form as the swarm dances previously described, but are somewhat different. Basically there are two movements. The first, called the round dance, consists of the scout running in a circle over the comb; this lasts about a minute, signifying that nectar is nearby, within a hundred yards of the hive, and foragers have only to look for it. The dancer could be saying, "You can't miss it!"

The second, known as the tail-wagging dance, is more complicated, the directions more involved, because the food source is farther away. Here we have not a single round circle, but two narrow semicircles, as if the two orbs were pushed together with a straight line connecting them in the middle. The dancer runs in a narrow semicircle, suddenly stops, and continues down the straight center line to the starting point; she then runs in the opposite direction (something like following a figure eight) to the starting point. This may continue several times, first right, then left, right, left. As the dancer heads down the straight line, she wags her abdomen, or tail, rapidly. Researchers recently found that the wagging movement is accompanied by a sound but its significance is not known.

The wagging dance signifies the presence of nectar from one hundred yards away up to the two-mile range in which bees usually forage; beyond this distance there are no known dances and the explorer is on her own, such flights involving considerable risk. The most remarkable aspect of the wagging dance is that it tells the bees how far they must go and the direction to travel; the dancer uses the sun as a reference point, traveling straight up the comb if the nectar lies in the direction of the sun, to right or left if it is to be found there.

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1941 Specer - the Queen bee

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14/01 certain circumstances even she is eliminated in a dark bee plot euphemistically known as "superseding," which usually involves the queen's murder by her own daughters, but more about that later. The most ordinary colony is better organized than the most efficient man-made factory. And yet, even these models of nature's organizational efficiency and industry are sometimes less than perfect, beset by such human failings as sloppy workmanship, useless endeavor, and what appears to be poor management or faulty judgment. Bee colonies, like human societies, vary in the standards they set for themselves and in the life-styles they adopt. Some prosper while others barely manage to struggle along, existing on the bee equivalent of welfare provided by their keeper, and some fail altogether, often victims of their own shortcomings.

Worker bees make up almost the entire population of the hive. These are females that lack the ability to produce a fertilized egg necessary to generate a female worker bee like themselves. There is only one queen to a hive, although there have been cases in which a second or even a third have been tolerated, but this is so rare that it suggests some kind of perversion of nature's intentions.

* 1941 The queen's only function is to lay eggs, as many as two thousand a day. Indeed, she is known as an "egg-laying machine." Completing the makeup of the hive are those comic-tragic, but vital, lusting clowns, the drones. There are relatively few of them in each hive and the number may represent less a necessity than a bee equivalent of conspicuous consumption. Drones are males conceived from unfertilized eggs laid by the queen. Their sole function is to mate with virgin queens, and most live and die without ever fulfilling this mission. The drone lives a life of bullying, nonproductive ease, like the worst free-loading relative, unless summoned to duty, in which case he may sacrifice his life, probably to his own surprise and dismay. For their intemperate ways, the surviving males eventually get their comeuppance in a bloody fall rite known as the

* Willis ugly thoughts
about Specer 1941

1941 THE QUEEN MUST DIE • 15

"massacre of the drones," a drama that will unfold here in its place.

A worker bee's existence is regulated by a biological timetable, which is one of the profound mysteries that govern a hive. During her brief life, she performs many diverse chores: scavenger, nurse, producer of wax, molder of honeycomb, housekeeper, forager, fanner, water carrier, undertaker, guard, warrior, and, finally, martyr. She passes from one of these roles to another, depending on age and experience. A bee is like a worker in industry who is rewarded for her experience and length of service with successive raises and promotions, until the employee is considered more liability than asset and the employer seeks to unload her and bring in a successor who is young, inexperienced, and inexpensive; success often bears a price tag of diminishing returns.

For the bee, indignity rarely accompanies old age. As noted previously, she either resolves the problem by working herself to death or is dispatched by her younger sisters. The climax role for a worker is that of forager, or field bee, gathering pollen and the nectar that will be converted into honey; but at the same time she is expected to perform other, often menial, hive duties. Efficiency and hive demands and not personal status or job assignment determine her roles throughout life and into death. We know of no prima donnas or egotists in the hive. The function of a bee is always contingent on community need.

Scientists believe that bees, next to humans, have the most elaborate social structure and specialization of labor in the animal kingdom, one far more complex and sophisticated than formerly thought. Only ants and termites approach bees in the intricacy of their societies.

For the multiple, specialized tasks a worker bee performs, she has no training or prior knowledge that we are aware of, but takes to each succeeding role naturally. How does this extraordinary progression come about? Is it genetic transference? Some unidentified dietary substance or secretion that is

equal to 50/50

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vent us from ever getting back on our feet, or at least in the next generation. . . . Once these powers have seen how strong a unified Germany is . . . we could not even count on the preservation of the present Reich after a failed military campaign.") Bismarck's policy was the only broad-based peace policy ever pursued by the German Reich.

Yet in his time Bismarck, granted his enormous political skill and honest intentions, did not quite reach the goal he had set himself. By his actions in the founding of the Reich he himself had created an implacable, lasting enemy for Germany—France—and his policy at and after the Congress of Berlin set the stage for a Franco-Russian alliance. At the same time he entered into an intimate relationship with Austria that, although he tried to prevent it, contained the seeds of conflicts. For unlike Bismarck's Germany, Austria was not a satisfied country. Like Russia, Austria wanted to inherit European Turkey, and this made a future conflict between Austria and Russia almost inevitable. Bismarck's Germany, despite his best intentions, became entangled in a conflict from which it was never able to disentangle itself. In 1914 this conflict of 1878–79 led directly to World War I. But in the background of World War I lay another conflict, the one between England and the German Reich, this one brought on not by Bismarck (despite his anti-English policies of 1884–85) but by the "world politics" of Wilhelm II.

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with Russia, which flew in the face of the German-
Austrian alliance. By granting Russia supremacy
in Bulgaria and pledging benevolent neutrality
even in the case of a Russian conquest of Con-
stantinople, this pact ran counter not only to the
Austrian alliance of 1879 but even to Bismarck's
"honest brokerage" at the Congress of Berlin. In
defense of Bismarck it has been said that he con-
cluded his pacts of the 1880s not for the reasons
pacts are generally made—protection in the event
of war—but rather that he pursued his deft, con-
tradictory policy of agreements to prevent such a
war.

That may be so. While in the late 1880s the
German and Austrian general staffs were busy
drawing up preventive war plans against Russia,
Bismarck wrote to the chief of the military cabi-
net: "It is the task of our policy to prevent the war
altogether, if possible, and if not, at least to post-
pone it. I could not take part in any other [policy]."

Still other completely convincing remarks by
Bismarck in the late eighties could be cited to
show that he really identified the interests of the
German Reich with the interests of European
peace. None of his successors did so with the
same determination, nor does it detract from his
achievement that he acted out of profound pes-
simism. ("If by the will of God we were to lose in
the next war," he wrote in a letter of 1886 to the
minister of war, "then I have no doubt that our
victorious opponents will use every means to pre-

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Italy and England that had meanwhile erupted, he decided that he could risk it. In June 1941 he did what he had promised in August 1939: Even though England was still in the war, he attacked Russia, if not with all the strength at his command, still with his massive land and air power.

In retrospect, one can say that this was Hitler's first major strategic blunder in this war, and that it alone was enough to make him lose the war. For despite great initial successes it soon became evident that Russia could not be defeated like Poland and France, that in the face of losses that in all likelihood would have brought any other European nation to its knees, Russia was able to mobilize its entire population and outlast the German Reich.

Hitler did not understand the changes that had taken place in Russia since the twenties. When Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf* that the huge empire in the East was on the brink of collapse, he may have been right. The young Soviet Union, after the ravages of World War I, the civil war, and the wars of intervention, was a rubble heap, a vast but exhausted, devastated country that most likely would not have been able to defend itself against a German attack.

Since then, however, Russia had come under Stalin's rule, an era of total concentration of all of its energies, during which pre-World War I agrarian Russia was transformed into a substantial industrial power. The Soviet Union Hitler went

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to war against in 1941 was not the superpower it is today, but it was an industrial power of considerable weight. Industrialization in conjunction with existing resources—the size of the country, the bravery and resilience of its vast population—made the Soviet Union a far more formidable adversary than the Russia of World War I.

Hitler won major battles and conquered much territory, but his attack faltered at the gates of Leningrad and Moscow and Rostov-on-Don. After months of defeat the Russians in the winter of 1941–42 were still able to launch a fairly successful military counteroffensive.

At the very moment of this Russian counteroffensive, in early December 1941, when it became obvious that Russia was not going to be overcome as quickly as anticipated, when Hitler was clearly facing a long, difficult struggle against the Soviet Union, when victory was by no means certain—at that very moment Hitler decided to declare war on the United States. This must be the most puzzling of any of his decisions in World War II. I cannot explain it. In my writings I have discussed a number of possible reasons and have read the various theories advanced by historians, yet I must admit that none of the explanations, neither my own hypotheses nor those of others, are very enlightening.

To go back: Since President Roosevelt's famous speech of 1937 in which he called for quarantining the aggressor nations—Japan, Italy, and

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Germany—there was no dearth of signals concerning Roosevelt's determination to intervene in a war started by any of these countries. But it was also clear that he faced much domestic opposition. Public opinion and the Congress remained isolationist. They wanted no part of the conflicts in the Old World; they were determined not to repeat the error of World War I and become involved in a European War on the side of the Entente.

Before December 1941 Roosevelt was unable to break through this isolationist resistance to his interventionism. There is no way of telling when and whether he would ever have succeeded if Hitler's declaration of war had not come along. Even after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, or rather because of the prospect of a major war in the Pacific, Hitler still had reason to hope that America would not intervene in the European war for some time to come. True, the war in the Pacific enabled America to mobilize its vast resources, but at the same time they were being deployed in the Pacific against Japan, a theater that posed no danger to Germany.

Hitler, however, used the Japanese attack as the occasion to declare war on the United States, almost as though he had lain in wait for just such a moment, and thereby gave Roosevelt what he wanted, a chance to enter the war against Germany on the side of England. Of course, this still took a great deal of time. Not until the summer of 1944 was America militarily strong enough to

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be preoccupied with the Japanese war. However, this is only one of many hypotheses.

One thing is certain: In 1941 Hitler made a fatal error by declaring war on the United States, adding the most powerful country in the world to his circle of enemies while he was still involved in the war against Russia and England. With that he sealed Germany's defeat.

Even after the attack on Poland there was no easy way for Hitler to get out of the war unscathed. Germany perhaps might have, but only under a different government, a government whose word could be trusted, to paraphrase Chamberlain. Obviously Hitler could not be trusted. In 1941 he sealed Germany's fate, first by deciding to take on Russia, and then by declaring war against the United States as well. Nineteen forty-one was the real beginning of World War II, before then it had simply been a limited European war. A direct line led from 1941 to 1945. The outcome was now certain, regardless of what Germany did or did not do.

True, major battles were still fought from 1942 to the end. The United States and England launched a tremendous air offensive against Germany in the hope of avoiding a land war, and they rained death and destruction on Germany. For the population of the occupied territories the final war years were the worst. The people of the Soviet Union suffered more in the long German retreat than they had in the rapid German advance. The

Germans were scorched earth forget the horror in 1941 in 1942 was ex

There were when a desperate ing to let Hitler a cease-fire if h of demarcation never agreed to about all these riously consider

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Two theories to one, Hitler never victory. After all miraculously but haps he hoped they disintegrate at the mitting him to and defeat the other such a scenario. I

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* Stalin's rage. 232

OO → Germany's defeat will bring on the collapse of Russia as defeat plan alone will

1941 & 1942

invade the continent in concert with England. But once Hitler had done Roosevelt the favor of declaring war on the United States, Germany's defeat could no longer be staved off. Why then did he do it? see p 236 (D.T.)

Even if this question cannot be answered unequivocally, some thoughts do offer themselves.

In July 1941, after his great initial successes, Hitler thought that the war against Russia was in the bag. At that moment, when the first step toward Germany's defeat had in fact already been taken, Hitler developed plans that went far beyond his original idea of incorporating Russia into the German sphere. That July he decided to cut back his buildup of the army, formerly a priority item because of the planned attack on Russia, in favor of a major naval expansion. As far as Hitler was concerned the war against the Soviet Union had already been won, and he was preparing for a worldwide blitzkrieg in which a big navy and air force would neutralize the United States before it could reach its full strength.

Not only did these grandiose plans never reach fruition, they never even got as far as the projected naval buildup, because beginning in 1942 the war against Russia once more moved to center stage. Still, those plans existed, and perhaps they even lived on in Hitler's head until the end of 1941. In a heedless moment he may even have believed as late as December 1941 that he could still fall back on them, since America seemed to

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1941-1942, 1944-5

Germans were determined to leave nothing but
scorched earth behind. And the world will never
forget the horror of the Final Solution, which be-
gan in 1941 in the occupied Soviet territory and
in 1942 was extended to all of occupied Europe.

There were still moments in 1942 and 1943
when a desperate, suffering Russia appeared will-
ing to let Hitler get out of the war in the East by
a cease-fire if he were to withdraw to the old line
of demarcation or the old German borders. Hitler
never agreed to that—and in effect one can forget
about all these conjectures. They never were se-
riously considered.

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Stalin
says

The only question that must still be asked
about the second half of World War II is why Hit-
ler, in a situation with no prospect of victory and
once his enemies, after some bickering, had
reached agreement on Germany's unconditional
surrender and carried the war into Germany, held
out amid the ruins of Berlin until his last-minute
suicide—and even managed to find fanatics ready
to impose his will on a terrified populace.

Two theories have been advanced. According
to one, Hitler never wavered in his belief in final
victory. After all, in his own political life he had
miraculously bounced back time and again. Per-
haps he hoped that the East-West alliance would
disintegrate at the very moment of victory, per-
mitting him to make a separate peace with one
and defeat the other. There is much to be said for
such a scenario. In the winter of 1944-45 he still

1941-1942, 1944-5

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1939, 1941, 1944

gamble," to which Hitler replied: "I've been gambling all my life." Whether or not he actually said it, it was the truth. He was a man who had to go for broke. If he could not make Germany into the world power then he was prepared to set off the greatest conflagration in German history. There are indications that at the end Hitler consciously desired that catastrophe. — *think of us Germans*

At the end of 1941, when the first signs that Germany might be facing defeat appeared, Hitler reportedly told a foreign diplomat: "If the German people should no longer be strong enough and determined enough to sacrifice their blood for their survival then let them perish and be destroyed by another, greater power. I will shed no tears for the German people." A truly unique admission from the lips of a German statesman.

At the end of the war, to the horror of many of his comrades, Hitler did indeed try to turn Germany's military defeat into the annihilation of the German people.

There exists a document, the so-called Nero Directive of March 18 and 19, 1945, in which Hitler ordered all still remaining resources of the Reich, even those vital to the survival of the population, to be destroyed rather than allow them to fall into the hands of the enemy. If Hitler could not be the architect of Germany's greatest victory then at least he could be the architect of its destruction. This order, which epitomizes Hitler's

II

The Military Leader

None of the books on Hitler's role as Supreme Commander of the German Armed Forces has dealt adequately with the questions that must be raised. It is, of course, difficult to analyze Hitler's role. During the Polish campaign of 1939, he had left the leadership to the General Staff of the Army; in the later course of the war, he gradually assumed such complete control that no important decision could be made without him. An adequate presentation of his military role is made still more difficult because of the fact that at the end of 1941, after Field Marshal von Brauchitsch had been relieved of his command, Hitler personally assumed the position of Supreme Commander of the Army.

The real problem lies deeper than the layer of facts on the surface. Hitler changed during the war. It is not too much to say that in the course of every year from 1939 to 1945 he became a different person. He learned a great deal, became more self-confident, and as a result of his successes during the early war years came to regard himself as a military genius who could rely on his inspiration and judgment and who needed only the support services of specialists. But the reverses on the battlefield had a profound effect on him. He did not draw the obvious military conclusions from the grave crisis of the winter of 1941-1942, when the German armies were stopped at the gates of Moscow, nor from the catastrophe of Stalin-

grad in February 1943, no North Africa in May 1943 react to them, however, by able, or, in Hitler's language

To what degree this rig factors remains unanswered day sense of the word, to be His basic approach and the and instructions, despite the sistest from the beginning o

1. Hitler as Supreme Com

The War Diary that it beca was assigned in January 19 Command of the Wehrmach OKW) shows clearly that H preme Commander of the W accurately as possible which and which were suggested to also noted, on the basis of th

"This increasing fanaticism c directives and orders, in which permission," "determined assault operation," "accepting the risk," example, the order of November (i.e., the Commanding General o von Rundstedt) to carry out "cc and the repeated admonitions to fight.

Corresponding orders were pa posts, though whether the comm ming by them or whether they a question. For example, the entry Hitler's suicide, in the War Dia High Command of the Wehrma the evening of April 25, 1945. " fanaticizing of the will to fight ir to this end have not yet been ext 1945, "for the Commander-in-Ch

relatively vague terms until learning of the similar proposal of (then) General Erich von Manstein, at which point he ordered the Army General Staff to implement it; and, finally,

3. The order given on the Eastern Front in the winter of 1941-1942—without respect to the bulges in the front, or even the pockets—to dig in and hold the very foremost line, thereby mastering the first serious crisis involving the Wehrmacht under his leadership (this last being a measure many of the experts have conceded was probably the best way to prevent the disastrous rout that even a controlled retreat could so easily have become under such frightfully adverse conditions—a rout which in the end could well have claimed more casualties than the ruthless order to hold fast, no matter what the cost).⁸

These successes led Hitler to believe, to quote Jodl's statement, "that he was a great military leader." But these are all events from the first half of the war; the second half confronted him with an entirely different challenge.

With his exceptional memory, Hitler had over the years accumulated a great store of knowledge of military and technical matters. Stenographic fragments of his situation conferences that survived destruction at the end of the war offer strong evidence that he knew how to use this store of knowledge. It is striking that Hitler, who had never directly observed combat during the Second World War, was able on the basis of countless reports and consultations to imagine clearly what was happening at the front. Because of his ability to visualize the potential effectiveness of individual weapons and the most efficient means of deploying them, he considered himself fully justified in intervening even in the details of tactical leadership. What he did not see was that the course of a war is not determined by technical and tactical considerations alone, but that there are many other factors that shape the outcome. And because of this

⁸Jodl's statements are from "Interview No. 62," recorded among the (unpublished) Nuremberg Documents under the number PS-3694 (Kö-19808). Jodl noted also that during the summer of 1942, spent at a headquarters established in Vinnitza in the Ukraine, Hitler was continually plagued by headaches due to the hot continental climate, as a consequence of which his energy and efficiency were reduced.

partial blindness, estimate of his own and rigidly to what objections or an ever stronger picture; and when acceptable facts to whether local field level, or member: increasingly distrust

Confronted by action was to ask that they failed to looking at things to that increasingly to latter half of the war

The qualities of mastering a crisis to General Wolff; were the soldier! Frederick the Great, in this connection they were reported. In the final phase was "potential" determination and said to General T

"Genius is a perseverance and thing in all of human and so forth, but and perseverance are mere soldiers one can back up and eternal vigilance man a fighter to the Whoever reads

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I Alfred Jodl on
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That Alfred Jodl, at the bottom of his heart, no longer believed in victory after the winter campaign of 1941-1942, and certainly not after Stalingrad the following winter, has already been mentioned. His tragedy was that he felt morally obligated, as a matter of official responsibility, not to divulge what he thought. Consequently, he moved sharply against anyone who arrived at the same conclusion. To General Walter Warlimont, his closest associate, he once said, in response to a skeptical remark, that Warlimont really belonged in a concentration camp. *scand*

[To grasp the full implications of Alfred Jodl's role is to perceive the frightful fate of those discerning General Staff officers who felt duty bound to be loyal to their Chief of State and Supreme Commander, who saw through and despised him as an autodidact but at the same time were fascinated by his "sixth sense," and in the end were condemned before the world as his accomplices.²

²Most revealing in this context is a note Jodl wrote on February 25, 1946, while imprisoned at Nuremberg, which was copied and graciously made available to me by his widow. In it he explains the motivation behind a speech which he delivered in autumn 1943 to an assembly of National Socialist party leaders in Munich. The drafts and documents he had assembled for this presentation, presented in evidence as Document L-172 at Nuremberg and reprinted in the *War Diary*, were not the final text of the speech, as Jodl himself pointed out to the court.

"I have the impression," he wrote, "that my speech of November 7, 1943, is causing the defense a great deal of concern."

"How it came about I have already explained."

"Not only I but dozens of officers have spoken before that circle—after my speech, for example, two other officers—because Hitler attached the greatest importance to mutual understanding between party leaders and officers.

"I also explained further that in Document L-172 the core [of the speech] dealing with the purely military presentation is lacking; only the trimmings are there. They had to express courage, confidence, faith, unity of will and action.

"In 1914-1918 I had experienced how front and homeland, soldier and worker, the leadership of the state and that of the people by the political parties had grown further and further apart in their thinking, until finally the state in the homeland collapsed and dragged the armed forces down in defeat and revolution as well. This experience remained so vivid that in the Second World War, I made it a guiding principle to do everything in my power to combat every division, every indication of breakdown—in short, all domestic conflicts insofar as they might affect the Wehrmacht. Each such manifestation at home would have provided fertile soil for effective enemy propaganda and

of the Operations Staff of the dictated this memoir, which he n the Leadership of the War (strategist)," to the wife of his oner at Nuremberg—excepting dictated later to his own wife, h. The tone of the addendum, orthand, is understandable in felt.¹

istory of Alfred Jodl's life will c of the general who was con- al Military Tribunal and exe- 1946. He felt constrained—if I this mask by virtue of the officer, and out of respect for erceived far better than others, ef memoir demonstrates—he n which he awaited execution.

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destine science is drawn around terrain surrounding it, so that ngs who in the course of a dili- and practice in the auditorium f to walk these tortuous paths. mple and direct. Is it not obvious hat Hitler should not have at- stronger than we believed it to e inevitable? Has the frightful not provided irrefutable proof? ult to describe the essence of analyze the basic elements and done in order to put together lf-evident picture with its end-

cept of strategy, very simply by e of battles for the purposes of but what it comprehends has sume an ever more total char- sly drew the entire state, with citizen, regardless of occupa- strategic leadership of war has on that it has come to include ereby exceeding the limits of s we see—in this war for the ategy" and "warlord," which de. No longer did we see any but only military operations. in, and Chiang Kai-shek were e or less heeding the advice of ey intervened as warlords only military operations. Only in had not kept pace with the its way to political power and

lead the country—though divided and without a strong political hand—in a war that was waged not as a means of politics, but rather with politics being made to serve as handmaiden of war. The reader should have a clear picture of this transformation before we go on to consider in greater detail Hitler's influence on the war, on the campaigns, and on the individual battles. Otherwise we cannot confront the question that has been posed again and again: How was it possible for the German military leaders and professionals to permit a layman and former corporal of the First World War to dictate to them the prescription for victory and defeat? Those who pose this question have not yet adequately understood what strategy in the modern sense is all about.

I believe it is necessary to define the concept in the following terms: Strategy is the supreme leadership activity in warfare. It comprehends foreign and domestic policy, military operations and economic mobilization, propaganda and popular leadership, and must harmonize these vital aspects of the war effort in terms of the purposes and the political goal of the war. Only when the concept of strategy is understood in such terms is it clear that no general but only a statesman can be a strategist, though this does not preclude the possibility that both functions may be united in one person, as was the case in China.

Hitler was a statesman. He was a dictator. He was Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht and since 1941 Commander-in-Chief of the Army as well. He had unleashed the war, and it was up to him and no one else to lead it. He did in fact lead the war. It was Hitler who gave the order in the spring of 1939 to prepare military plans for the attack on Poland. No soldier could know whether the attack would take place, whether it would be provoked or unprovoked, a war of aggression or of defense; for even a politically defensive war could be waged by Germany—given its central position and the constant prospect of a two-front war—only as a military offensive. When the propaganda machine began to run and mobilization on the Polish border was ordered, all the leading soldiers were indeed quite clear about the operational questions confronting them, but the political, the strategic remained for them a veiled secret. Had Hitler himself not implied and even stated in his ad-

April 1, 1941

A 202 Hitler: The Man and the Military Leader

there only with difficulty. Concern was now stronger than pride in Rome, and cries for help crossed over the Alps as far as the Reich Chancellery in Berlin. Hitler decided that in view of modern long-range aerial warfare we had to wage the war as far from the periphery of the Reich as possible. Therefore [Hitler ordered] help for Africa through Rommel and good mobile armored troops. He wanted no conflict with Greece, so he refused help in Albania. But for the spring of 1941 he ordered that an attack against Greece from Bulgaria be prepared in case this should become necessary after all, or even be forced on us by an English landing in Greece.

There was not much consultation before these decisions. They were unfortunately constrained—as much as Hitler's generals on purely military grounds resisted this commitment of forces to different theaters. For meanwhile the specter of a massive Russian concentration of forces on the eastern borders of Germany and Rumania had taken concrete form, and Hitler was weighing the thought of preventive war. The world has learned from the Nuremberg Trial of many voices that warned against this march [into Russia]. All agree that it was definitely Hitler's idea originally. Both [the fact that the idea originated with Hitler and that he was warned against it] are historical facts. The court judges according to good and evil, world history in terms of correct and false. I will not concern myself here with either of the two judgments, but rather only point out that the danger from the East was seen by all soldiers, and Hitler's concern was shared, more by some, less by others. Opinions differed whether the danger was really so acute and whether it might not have been possible to deal with it by political means. On that question it will be necessary to await a later judgment. Here we are interested only in the influence it had on Hitler's waging of the war, and of that the following can be said: the decision for the campaign against the USSR, Plan "Barbarossa," was his decision and his alone. He did, however, make the final decision only on April 1, 1941. For at this time an event occurred that effectively delayed the beginning of the attack against the almost completely assembled Soviet forces by four to five weeks. For Hitler it was like a beacon that revealed Stalin's intentions.

It was the military coup in Belgrade the night after Yugoslavia's

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accession to the Tripartite Pact.⁵ Hitler was beside himself. He
virtually dictated his decisions to the assembled Commanders-in-
Chief and the Reich Foreign Minister. He tolerated no discussion
of whether the political attitude of the Yugoslavian government
should first be clarified diplomatically. So far as he was concerned,
Yugoslavia was in league with Russia, prepared to strike us from
behind when we marched into Greece, and was trying to establish
contact with the English, who at the beginning of March had landed
at Piraeus. And as a matter of fact, the Yugoslavian Army did mo-
bilize on the borders. Beginning on April 6, it was overrun by
German troops, even though these had very hastily concentrated, and
within a few weeks it had reached the point of dissolution—[though
these were] the same soldiers who then, only scantily clad, would
for years wage a bitter guerrilla war under Tito's leadership, until
they were developed into a new Communist army.

The attack on Russia began on June 22 [1941]. The two-front
war had been unleashed. It could lead to success only if it were pos-
sible to win an annihilating victory over the enemy on one front.
This failed by only a little, but that little sufficed, together with the
catasrophe of the cold winter, to carry Hitler's train of victories,
after having reached this culmination, over onto a declining track.
When in 1942 he decided once more to commit all his forces in the
attempt to break down the Russian colossus, he was not contradicted
in principle by his military advisers; but there were many among
them who would rather have seen the second major attack in the
North, beginning with the capture of Leningrad, than in the direction
of the Caspian Sea. The great apparent success of this campaign
ended with the catastrophe on the Don and before Stalingrad. When
toward the end of the year Rommel, defeated before the gates of
Egypt, fell back on Tripoli as the Allies landed in French North
Africa, it was clear not only to the responsible soldiers but to Hitler
himself that the god of war had now turned from Germany and
gone over to the other camp. With that, Hitler's activity as a
strategist was essentially ended. From then on, he intervened more
and more frequently in operational decisions, often down to matters

⁵The German-Italian-Japanese Pact was signed by Yugoslavia on March
25, 1941, followed by the coup on March 27.

D.T. 4 The real question for all of us
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of tactical detail, in order to impose with unbending will what he thought the generals simply refused to comprehend: that one had to stand or fall, that each voluntary step backwards was an evil in itself. Opinions differ as to whether he thereby hastened or delayed the end of the war. One thing only is certain: he could no longer come to a strategic decision. But perhaps there was no longer one to be reached.

He could not surrender. None of the opponents would consider negotiating since agreeing on unconditional surrender as their war-time goal. Therefore what was Hitler to do? He could only fight to the end or seek his own death. Throughout his whole life he had been a fighter, so he chose the first course. Heroism or insanity, opinion throughout the world will always differ on it. Could he not, in order to save his people unnecessary suffering, have come to an earlier end? As a matter of fact, this very thought did concern Hitler during the last days of his life. When he informed me on April 22 [1945] of his decision not to leave Berlin again but to die there, he added: "I should already have made this decision, the most important in my life, in November 1944, and should never have left the headquarters in East Prussia."⁶

But his military advisers—today one often hears it said—should certainly have made it clear to him earlier that the war was lost. What a naive thought! Earlier than any other person in the world, Hitler sensed and knew that the war was lost. But can one give up a Reich and a people before they are lost? A man like Hitler could not do it. He should have fallen in battle rather than taking flight in death, it is said. He wanted to, and he would have done so if he had been physically able. As it was, he did not choose the easier death, but the more certain one. He acted as all heroes in history have acted and will always act.

He had himself buried in the ruins of his Reich and his hopes. May whoever wishes to condemn him for it do so—I cannot.

[Signed:] ALFRED JODL

[The foregoing reflections are complemented by the following passage]

⁶This sentence ends the original statement which Jodl dictated to his defense counsel's wife. The remaining two paragraphs were dictated to his own wife after he was convicted and sentenced to death, as explained in the introductory note.

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far as he was concerned, and to his intimates he spoke very critically of the *Gottgläubigen* or "Believers," who counted on his support.¹

For Jesus as Savior there was, of course, no room in Hitler's view of things, but he recognized Jesus' human greatness. Hasselbach testifies: "Hitler saw Christ as a unique person whose life work was dogmatically reinterpreted in essential respects during the following centuries in the interest of the Church and has therefore been handed down in a distorted form. [Hitler thought that] as a Galilean, Christ was of Aryan descent, and quite apart from his ethical values, he had to be admired for the genius he showed in leading the struggle of the people against the power and pretensions of the corrupt Pharisees." Hitler was not the first to propose this naive and contrived "rehabilitation."

Instead of "God," Hitler used the word "Providence," which had become common in the eighteenth century and continued to be used by religious liberals, or else he spoke of "the Creative Power."² Whoever looks through a telescope or a microscope, he thought, will recognize the laws of nature: "Then a person really does have to become humble." When Hitler survived the assassination attempt of July 20, 1944, he attributed it to Providence, which seemed almost blasphemous to people who thought in Christian terms, but there is no reason to question Hitler's sincerity about this interpretation. In a conversation in October 1941, he took an explicit stand against pure atheism: "The fact is that we are weak creatures, but that there is a creative power. It would be stupid to try to deny it. The person who believes in something which is untrue stands higher than the one who believes in nothing at all."

To the degree that Hitler had any concrete conception of what he called Providence, it was related to his biologically oriented view of life: "The only thing to do, then, is to study the laws of nature,

¹The so-called *Gottgläubigen* or "Believers in God" rejected conventional Christianity but insisted they were not atheistic. Many National Socialists were *gottgläubig*.—ED.

²When Hitler on occasion spoke of the "Almighty Creator of this world," this was undoubtedly a calculated concession to the sensibilities of his audience.

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14. Hitler's Moral and Logical Consequences

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of course, no room in Hitler's view of man's human greatness. Hasselbach, a unique person whose life work was devoted to the study of the natural sciences, during the following years and has therefore been handed down to posterity as a Galilean, Christ, and so on. He showed in leading the struggle against the pretensions of the corrupt and in proposing this naive and con-

cept of the word "Providence," which had been common in the 19th century and continued to be so in the 20th. He spoke of "the Creative Power."² He spoke of a microscope, he thought, "Then a person really does have to survive the assassination attempt if it is Providence, which seemed almost a thought in Christian terms, but Hitler's sincerity about this interpretation is clear. In October 1941, he took an explicit stand on this. It is that we are weak creatures, and it would be stupid to try to do something which is untrue stands in nothing at all."

He had any concrete conception of what was related to his biologically oriented view of nature, is to study the laws of nature,

"Believers in God" rejected conventional religion and not atheism. Many National Socialists

of the "Almighty Creator of this world," and concession to the sensibilities of his

so as not to attempt anything which might be contrary to them. To do otherwise would be to rebel against the firmament! If I want to believe in a divine commandment, it can only be this: preserve the species.

These convictions were derived from no single author or school, but emerged from the intellectual milieu in which Hitler was rooted. One of the most important figures of the day was Ernst Haeckel, the self-proclaimed disciple of Darwin, advocate of the "Basic Law of Bio-Genetics," and author of the widely read *The Riddle of the Universe* (first published in German in 1899). Important also were the German Monistic League, founded in 1906 on the basis of Haeckel's teachings, and his disciple Wilhelm Bölsche, who, in a popular series of works, among them *From Bacillus to Apeman* (1899), promoted evolution as a philosophy of life.

This faith in Providence became more and more intertwined in Hitler's mind with a cult of himself. According to Alfred Jodl, he was dominated by "an almost mystical conviction of his infallibility as leader of the nation and of the war." Dr. Brandt, one of Hitler's physicians, reported that he was convinced he was "a tool of Providence. He was . . . consumed by the desire to give the German people everything and to help them out of their distress. He was possessed by the thought that this was his task and that only he could fulfill it."

Hitler's self-confidence was in large measure based upon his idea of Providence, and the more clearly the facts contradicted him, the more strongly he embraced it. According to an old saying, one learns to pray in the hour of need. Hitler, while he did not, perhaps, pray, did fall back on his own peculiar form of monism, a belief in a Providence that could not fail him.

14. Hitler's Morality: An Infernally Logical Consistency

Hitler's religious convictions came to have monstrous historical importance because he used them to justify what he considered to be morality. But there were other factors in his conception of morality from quite different sources.

* Dr. T. Dr. was it, accelerate the dissolution of the species

used in the training of infantrymen, where the dogs had to demonstrate whether they had intelligence as well as courage.⁴

The friend of women, children, and animals—this was one face of Hitler, neither acted nor feigned, but entirely genuine. There was, however, a second face which he did not show to his table companions, though it was no less genuine.

In his *Table Conversations* Hitler said that he would personally shoot down whoever dared to commit certain offenses. Knowing that he had never personally fired a shot at a political enemy, his guests did not take his warning at face value. At times Hitler would get carried away and make terrible threats. But he rarely spoke of the hideous orders he was giving precisely during the months when the *Table Conversations* were being recorded, and which in the end cost millions their lives. To point out only a few examples from the months in question:

September 16, 1941: Stopping General Hoepner's armored column short of Leningrad, with a view toward eliminating the population of the city by starvation; similar thoughts about the fate of Moscow.

October 21, 1941: Execution of fifty French hostages by firing squad because of the killing of a German officer; thenceforth, in all theaters of war, strictest application of the policy of breaking terror with terror.

January 20, 1942: Wannsee conference, initiating the deportation of the Jews to the East and beginning their systematic annihilation.

February 1942: Integration of the steadily burgeoning concentration camps into the German war economy.

March 21, 1942: Authorization for Gauleiter Sauckel to incorporate foreign slave workers into the Germany economy.

⁴Once I had an opportunity to observe how well trained one of Hitler's dogs was. On a walk near the *Wolfschanze* one day I came across a non-commissioned officer who was responsible for the dogs' care and was taking one of them for a walk. Since I used to have shepherd dogs myself, I observed the dog with interest, whereupon the soldier showed me how quickly she obeyed every command to sit, stand, and so forth. I had the impression not of a dog but a machine, and wondered whether Hitler in the training of his dogs was not motivated by a desire to extinguish the individual wills even of these animals.

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Up to this point, Hitler's ideas about the Church are not common. Many others have taken a similar position. What is startling, however, is the malicious condescension with which Hitler disparaged the "shavelings," including the popes, and how he attributed everything they had ever achieved to exclusively base motives. He accused them of a "cunning mixture of hypocrisy and avarice," and spoke of their "satanic superstition" as well as of the "hypocrisy" of Christian teachings about love. So profound and intense was his hatred that he was continually conceiving new phrases to give it expression. Basically, his view of the Church was rooted in the unsophisticated polemicism of the nineteenth century, which in turn had its origins in a vulgarized liberalism derived from the popularization of the teachings of the Enlightenment. Any more recent ideas about the role of the Church in the modern world were apparently unknown to him. When his ruthless campaign against both Catholicism and Protestantism in Germany led to the mobilization of both religions' full resources in defense, Hitler's reaction was to see in this nothing but a political response, requiring appropriate laws, surveillance, and arrests. He was apparently oblivious to the spiritual, intellectual, and moral dimensions of the issue.

Hitler's relationship to the Church was riven by the most obvious contradiction. Hitler regarded himself, rightly, as a master of mass psychology—as someone who not only knew the way the masses thought but also knew how to manipulate their thinking. Yet in his relationship to the Church he became a prisoner of his own prejudices. He applied precisely the wrong methods to deal with the very opposition he himself had provoked, thus clearly demonstrating his limitations. He was so badly crippled by his own narrow-mindedness on the subject of the Church that his policy can only be described, and this charitably, as obtuse.¹

¹The limitations of Hitler's policy toward the Church were dramatically demonstrated in August 1941. At the beginning of the war, Hitler had ordered that all persons who were incurably ill be put to death as socially worthless parasites. His compulsory euthanasia policy was top secret, but a program which within two years provided for the killing of some seventy thousand persons could hardly be concealed indefinitely. The victims were drawn from all walks of life throughout Germany. Relatively large numbers of people were directly engaged in the euthanasia program. At first suspicion and then

* his father

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Only after his conflict with the Catholic Church was well underway did Hitler turn his attention to the Protestants, for whom he had even less respect than he did for the Catholics. "The hypocritical bigotry of the Protestants is far worse than that of the Catholic Church," he said in December 1941. The Catholic Church had a broader outlook, in Hitler's opinion, and was also more cunning in the matter of forgiving sins. Describing the only conference he ever had with the leaders of the Protestant Church in Germany,

alarm mounted as word spread of more and more patients dying of appendicitis who had had appendectomies years earlier, or of stroke, though their families had seen them, in weekly visits over the years, as placidly feeble-minded souls who would hardly be expected to die of such a cause.

Then, on August 3, 1941, Count Clemens August von Galen, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Münster, proclaimed from his pulpit in St. Lambert's that throughout his Westphalian diocese, on state orders, lists of incurables were being drawn up in hospitals and sanatoria. These people were to be murdered by the government. The first transport from Marienthal, near Münster, had already left the past week. "Woe unto mankind," the bishop continued, "and woe unto the German people, when the holy Commandment of God, 'Thou shalt not kill,' . . . not only is violated, but when this violation is even tolerated and goes unpunished!" Nor did Bishop Galen stop there. With the holy fervor of an Old Testament prophet, he lashed out with example after example of how the Germans under Hitler had flagrantly violated many other Commandments.

The wrathful sermon had an electrifying effect. It was printed and copies were distributed not only to all corners of Germany but among the troops in the field. Many Nazi leaders urged that Galen be hanged. The grey eminence of the Third Reich, Martin Bormann, who had become head of the Party Chancellery after Rudolf Hess's flight to Scotland, argued that such treason deserved nothing less than the death sentence. But Hitler's shrewd propaganda minister, Dr. Josef Goebbels, emphatically demurred, calculating "that the population of Münster could be regarded as lost during the war, if anything were done against the bishop, and in that fear one safely could include the whole of Westphalia." Rather than write off the industrial heartland of Germany for the rest of the war, Hitler swallowed his fury and accepted his impotence—for the time being. Within a month of Galen's sermon the compulsory euthanasia program was halted.

Aside from the fact that his courage saved untold thousands of lives, Cardinal Galen's case is important to an understanding of Hitler. His successful defiance dramatically demonstrated that although the Nazi regime had reached an unprecedented degree of control over the country, there were still very real limits to its power of life and death over the German people. Hitler and Goebbels, despite their hatred and frustration, were well aware of that fact, and accepted it with nothing more than the thought of future vengeance to comfort them.—ED.

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Hitler recalled an embarrassingly distorted picture in which frayed
frocks and soiled linen played a role. It was almost as if he were
intellectually allergic to Protestantism.

In the final analysis, Hitler's conception of the danger to state
and culture represented by Catholics and Protestants was essen-
tially the same. He was very clear about what he planned to do
about it: "The worst influence on the people are our pastors of
both confessions. I cannot give the answer now, but everything is
being entered into my big black book. The time is going to come
when I will settle with them without any ceremony, and when that
time comes, I have no intention of letting myself be tripped up by
any legalistic nets. The only consideration will be what is practical.
I am convinced that within ten years everything will look entirely
different. There is no way to avoid a basic solution."

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This is a clear, stenographically authenticated, and therefore
literally accurate statement, which should be the point of departure
for any consideration of whether Pope Pius XII and the Catholic
Church, as well as the "Confessing" Church (the wing of German
Protestantism which did not accept the supervision of Nazi-domi-
nated state ecclesiastical authorities), acted correctly or not during
the Third Reich. This statement shows how decisive and brutal their
enemy was.

No one will be surprised that the theme of anti-Semitism runs
through the *Table Conversations* like a red thread. The *Conversa-
tions* offer nothing new here, since Hitler had already expressed
himself on the Jews so often. But the *Conversations* do bring out
more clearly than other sources the two sides of Hitler's anti-Semi-
tism. On the one hand, he based his argument on allegedly empirical
facts conjoined with a pseudo-scientific biological theory. For ex-
ample, he once said about the children born of mixed marriages
between Jews and Gentiles: "Experience proves that after four,
five, or six generations, the offspring of these Jews always
mendel out pure Jews again." On the other hand, he let him-
self be ruled by a Semitophobia which was absolutely grotesque
and appalling in its implications. Behind Stalin, he felt, stood the
Jew. A small clique of Jews in Sweden had "colossal influence." It
was clear to him that "the Roosevelt regime in the U.S.A. is un-

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questionably a Jewish organization." And so it went, on and on, tiresomely into the night. The only thing that might still evoke some sense of surprise among his table companions would be the startling manner in which an objective analysis would suddenly, as though by a sort of intellectual short-circuit, lead into an outburst against the "international brood of Jewish traders," against the Jewish-dominated world press with its lying blather, or against the alleged activities of the Jews in some other derogatory fashion. No matter what happened in the world, and no matter in what country it happened, Hitler saw the Jew behind it, and especially was this the case if the event involved something unfavorable for Germany. This anti-Semitic mania, or "tic," often prevented Hitler from analyzing a situation objectively in order to decide on a rational course of action. To this extent Hitler was almost like the medieval person who sensed the presence of the devil everywhere. But whereas in the Middle Ages a man might cross himself or—if he had the courage of Luther—hurl the inkpot at Satan, Hitler's mania led to his revenging himself on the millions of Jews who fell into his hands in Germany and the occupied areas of Europe.

Hitler's anti-Semitism had its origins in the early impressions of his youth, but it was reinforced during the five years he spent in Vienna before moving, at the age of twenty-four, to the Bavarian capital of Munich in 1913. Those prewar years in Vienna were, as Hitler himself points out in *Mein Kampf*, the period when the Viennese lower middle classes were organized by the city's anti-Semitic mayor, Karl Lueger, into political shock troops, while the nationalists under Baron von Schönerer also made use of anti-Semitic slogans. Hitler's anti-Semitism was further intensified during the long years of his struggle for power, for its very vehemence understandably provoked Jewish resistance in many forms.⁵ In addition, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, frequently republished

⁵The social and cultural background of Hitler's anti-Semitism is given in Peter G. P. Pulzer's *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (New York, 1964), while the most complete study of Hitler's anti-Semitism in practice is Raul Hilberg's impressive—and appalling—*The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago, 1961).—ED.

since 1903, made a deep impression on the Jews and the white—the Jews were out to rule the world! Hitler never the fact that *The Protocols* had a crude falsification whose origin by serious scholarship.

Many different factors help to explain no matter how far one goes to the inexplicable always remains. Hitler and during his own lifetime hated them, or who even despised passed him in the extent to which he grew into so intensive a mania of faculty of reason. Where has this self be driven by his hatred to

The attempt has been made to demonstrate that there were no grounds for this theory, the charge originated are supposed to have that a Jewish master who took employment should actually be listened to. It may sound plausible that the strain in himself, turned him on the Jews in general as scapegoats for punishment. But when subjected to this, it has turned out to be highly dubious.⁶ In the unprecedented and immeasurable finally founder on the inexplicable

⁶Schramm refers to the suspicion of Jewish. It has been discredited. For "Appendix I: The Alteration of the Name in Bradley F. Smith, *Adolf Hitler: A Biography* (New York, 1967), pp. 157–160. According to studies of the early history of the Nazis, his "missing" paternal grandfather was his mother's grandfather.—ED.

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tion on even as many as 30 per cent. But Hitler declared that the very high percentage did not surprise him at all; it merely confirmed the impression about insurrectionists which he had developed in Germany in 1918-1919.

He was also prepared to accept a report that coincided with his concept of the Roman Catholic Church, whereby Franco had accorded to St. Tununcisla the full military honors of a field marshal, because she had protected the "Whites" in Segovia. A call to a specialist in Hispanic literature and culture would easily have established the fact that there never was a saint in Segovia with that un-Spanish-sounding name. In any case, immediately following this revelation one of the members of Hitler's circle produced a similar tale—an example not only of the uncritical acceptance of what Hitler said, but also of the manner in which his followers echoed him.

11. Hitler's Relationship to History

It was in history, according to Dr. von Hasselbach, that Hitler was most interested: "In long conversations he would repeatedly make it the basis of his political reflections and projections."

"Whoever has no sense of history is like a person without hearing or without a face; he can live that way," remarked Hitler in July 1941, "but what kind of a life is that?" This sounds a bit like an allusion to Goethe's remark that anyone unable to account for four thousand years would spend his lifetime as a fool. But the similarity is mere accident, for Hitler had no intellectual affinity with Goethe.

Hitler liked to consider himself and his lifework in the stream of history; he saw himself as someone who gleaned examples and warnings from the past regarding what he had done and was undertaking. It should therefore explain much about Hitler's vision of himself if, by summarizing his judgments, we can reconstruct his picture of the course of world history.

Hitler's knowledge of primeval times appears to have been slight, despite the fact that even in the nineteenth century a plausible pic-

ture of the stages of development at the end of the prehistoric period had to be conjectured. Whether it might not be necessary to go back to the Greeks and the Germanic people, a natural catastrophe that destroyed the world, was a kind. To the objection that this was a strangle, he replied with the contrived kind, is transitory, so that any transitory bronze- or iron-age civilization would in any case, this culture could have lain beneath the sea. These and similar including the myth of the lost continent not unique to Hitler.

As a neoclassicist, Hitler had glorification of the early period of many of his followers. For all the Nazis, Hitler recognized the greatness of the statesmanship of the Romans: only during the last millennia before the thousand years after his birth, were the decline of classical civilization of what he felt he had to prevent in what caused the fall of the ancient world. January 1942, and he then proceeded to decline the degeneration of the ruling and fewer children, and the growth of another time he explained that it was who had destroyed the Roman Empire which he attributed a corrupting influence. Shevism—a variation of a hypothesis by Edward Gibbon and the of different forms.

After the fall of the Roman Empire had been continually threatened from during the time of the Huns and the have been renewed by the Bolsheviks against them. Hitler had only the me-

1939, 1941

many there were only
their political activity
of fighting a phantom
century which he un-

in the case of Hitler's
inted out how abiding
y youth when he had
singer in the choir. In
ch the teachings of the
he more he had con-
tented he had found
but from Christianity
ide in October 1937.
r a hard inner struggle,
ins of his childhood.
pasture." With what
own creed, which was
imon before the First

everything connected
religious insanity and
tions. Impelled by his
the Church as a back-
chings were a cultural
hes, simply had to be
"Today no one who is
the teachings of the
he acknowledged that
is stroke of a pen. The
renous limb."

reality, took the form of
sm, as represented by the
e Weltraisel The Riddle
dler, and by the physicist
volumes of monistic Sun-
d moral teachings of this
Aism.—L.D.

Up to this point, Hitler's ideas about the Church are not un-
common. Many others have taken a similar position. What is
startling, however, is the malicious condescension with which Hit-
ler disparaged the "shavelings," including the popes, and how he
attributed everything they had ever achieved to exclusively base
motives. He accused them of a "cunning mixture of hypocrisy and
avarice," and spoke of their "satanic superstition" as well as of the
"hypocrisy" of Christian teachings about love. So profound and
intense was his hatred that he was continually conceiving new
phrases to give it expression. Basically, his view of the Church was
rooted in the unsophisticated polemicism of the nineteenth century,
which in turn had its origins in a vulgarized liberalism derived from
the popularization of the teachings of the Enlightenment. Any more
recent ideas about the role of the Church in the modern world were
apparently unknown to him. When his ruthless campaign against
both Catholicism and Protestantism in Germany led to the mobili-
zation of both religions' full resources in defense, Hitler's reaction
was to see in this nothing but a political response, requiring appro-
priate laws, surveillance, and arrests. He was apparently oblivious
to the spiritual, intellectual, and moral dimensions of the issue.

Hitler's relationship to the Church was riven by the most obvious
contradiction. Hitler regarded himself, rightly, as a master of mass
psychology—as someone who not only knew the way the masses
thought but also knew how to manipulate their thinking. Yet in his
relationship to the Church he became a prisoner of his own prej-
udices. He applied precisely the wrong methods to deal with the
very opposition he himself had provoked, thus clearly demonstrating
his limitations. He was so badly crippled by his own narrow-minded-
ness on the subject of the Church that his policy can only be de-
scribed, and this charitably, as obtuse.

The limitations of Hitler's policy toward the Church were dramatically
demonstrated in August 1941. At the beginning of the war, Hitler had ordered
that all persons who were incurably ill be put to death as socially worthless
parasites. His compulsory euthanasia policy was top secret, but a program
which within two years provided for the killing of some seventy thousand
persons could hardly be concealed indefinitely. The victims were drawn from
all walks of life throughout Germany. Relatively large numbers of people
were directly engaged in the euthanasia program. At first suspicion and then

* his father

cies of Nostradamus—
cluded—the pamphlet
g fire-machines', stress-
would be preserved
brochures, I had never
mendous effect. All the
ies to divert the great
reach South-eastern

an's armoured column
ville, the capitulation
of the Anglo-French
ment at Arras. At this
won.

the German armies to
ditional battlegrounds
planation in the per-

on at the climax of the
a position to attack the
west—that is, from the
summits to hold off their
man motorized spear-
and wait for the
ver against the French
reports from the front,
clearly established that
stitute a threat to the
have put forward the
erve failed, and that he
ve which would have
German General Staff

operation 'Seelöwe' [Sea-
for this giant under-
as, when, in September,

German alliance against

England at the armistice negotiations with France is also attribut-
able to his personal views and prejudices.

Anti-British feeling was running high in France at the time, and
was intensified by the heroic struggle of the French Fleet against
the superior forces of the British. As far as the British were con-
cerned, the *Entente Cordiale* was dead, as it was of little use to them
in the life-and-death struggle for their own island home which
now ensued. Churchill admitted quite openly that he had refused
to expend the strength of the British Air Force in France.

German relations with France, however, could never grow into
an active collaboration because of Hitler's underlying suspicion
and revulsion. He considered the French to be a dying nation,
biologically, economically, and morally. And in order to achieve
a compromise with England he would have sacrificed France
without a moment's hesitation.

The failure to achieve a Franco-German alliance, the hesitation
that allowed the British Expeditionary Force to escape under the
very eyes of the Germans, and the subsequent failure to proceed
resolutely to the next step—obvious even to the lowliest private in
the German Army—the immediate invasion of the British Isles,
found its final explanation in Hitler's blind and stubborn convic-
tion that the British were a Germanic brother-people worthy of
preservation. Great Britain would finally see reason and join
Germany. As he told me personally in 1939: 'By no means do I
wish to destroy the British. I want them to be humbled, and to
learn to see things from a Continental-European viewpoint, as
we see them. They have to give up their policy of a balance of
power in Europe. They may keep their colonial empire and their
naval power. But on the Continent they have to grow close to us
and form a unity with us. Then we will rule Europe together and
the East will no longer be a danger.'

Until late in the year 1941 Hitler believed that he could achieve
an understanding with Great Britain. As Bismarck had forced
Austria into an alliance with Germany by inflicting military
defeat upon her, so Hitler wanted to win an alliance from Britain
by the same means.

But at the time of Operation 'Sea-lion', in the summer of 1940,
he had not yet recognized the impossibility of achieving an under-

FEB. 14/1

On December 18, 1940 Hitler signed the order: 'Wehrmachtsbefehl Nr 21—Operation Barbarossa'—the attack on the Soviet Union. It provided for an offensive by a strength of about one hundred infantry divisions, twenty-five armoured and thirty fully motorized divisions. On February 3, 1941, Hitler approved the strategic plan for the offensive which the Supreme Commander of the army, Field-Marshal von Brauchitsch, placed before him.

After two months in Karlsbad I returned to Berlin. It was very hard to adjust myself again to the hectic atmosphere of the capital. The chief task now was counter-espionage work against the Soviet Union. The centres of interest here were the border countries, Rumania, Hungary, Poland and Finland. The Western sectors of our security network had to be weakened in order to strengthen the Eastern ones. A special problem was created by the thousands of Russian emigrés, White Russians, Ukrainians, Georgians, etc., living in Germany. We knew that Russian Intelligence used a number of them as their agents, so I created a net of informants among them, using the Russian system of groups of three—each member of the group had to inform on the others without their being aware of it. At the moment, securing information about them seemed more important than the possibility of using them later on for occupation work in their own countries. We had sufficient Russian emigrés already actively working for our Secret Service.

The Russian Secret Service in Germany was becoming increasingly active and we were able to observe the growth of this extensive network. It was very difficult to decide how long to continue the surveillance and when to end it by making arrests. Merely to observe what objectives interested the enemy sometimes enabled us to draw valuable conclusions. But waiting too long could lead to very damaging results. Once, by delaying longer than I should have done, I spoiled a very important case. My assistants had warned me, but I had not listened to them.

The head of our Counter-Espionage in Breslau was a very able official, a specialist in Eastern European matters, with an excellent knowledge of Russian and Polish. He had been active in this area for many years, and his work showed quite good results. His opposite number in Military Intelligence had a similar background.

After I had been head of Counter-Espionage I began to feel dissatisfied with the work. I suspected that in many instances the work was not thorough investigation. We found regularly in their homes and the unusually high standard of living, accounts, and particularly of the increased wealth. They received visitors in their homes, and we discovered people who did not live in Breslau.

Then one of them reported to me while it was parked in the important documents had been under surveillance and not make an arrest had vanished, having taken with documents from their offices.

The wife of the Military Intelligence from an unknown cause. The wife was arrested and interrogated, beginning that her husband had been with Russian Intelligence, thinking to make a valuable coup for us. I was convincing. The house was thorough search were found some fragments able to put together well enough you will come and join me'. It was which her husband had written and seen it, and said that it was not handwriting, though the writer's fluence of alcohol or drugs.

The case was never cleared up. Extensive and widespread search, no men was found. Nor could we whether they were traitors, or whether or perhaps killed. All the evidence

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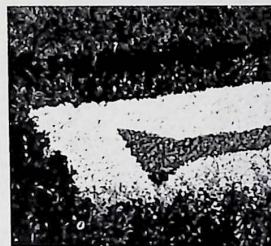
wife, pointed towards the conclusion that they were traitors. However, I did not take any action against the wife, and arranged to have a small grant paid for the support of the child which the man had left behind. As a result of the affair, we had completely to reorganize the security system of the Silesian war industries, for the material that disappeared with the two men contained a comprehensive account of its organization.

Heydrich was lenient about this error of mine. He even tried to console me, saying that this kind of affair was the sort of 'tuition fee' that everyone had to pay, and there was no reason why I should be spared such embarrassments.

The next day I was at his hunting lodge. During the course of our conversation, in which he stressed again the importance of strengthening the Counter-Espionage work against the Russians, and said that the Fuehrer was watching this work very closely, he finally began to talk about Admiral Canaris. He was very critical of Canaris's work as Head of Military Intelligence. He felt certain, in fact, that Canaris had betrayed the date of the attack in the West—May 10, 1940—to the Allies, but nevertheless he did not want to proceed against him just yet. He would wait and gather more evidence. The day would come, however, when Canaris would be punished for all the damage he had caused to the régime.

Heydrich then went on to speak of the problem of the whole Intelligence network. He was still very much preoccupied with certain setbacks he had had recently, and saw their cause in the organizational weakness of the various Intelligence Services, especially the SD Ausland, the Foreign Intelligence Branch of the Main Security Office, usually called AMT VI. Until now they had been allowed to function under the loosest control, but if anything went wrong, it was he, Heydrich, who would receive the blame. He realized the great difficulty of integrating a foreign intelligence service into an internal security organization, particularly in wartime, but the whole level of the work of this department was unsatisfactory, the training and experience of the younger people inadequate, and the direction they received from their superiors bad.

I had been aware of these problems for a long time and had come to very similar conclusions. I had therefore been expecting



(Top) Schellenberg before the

and Jutta in our service. He operated chiefly in Italy—he spoke Italian fluently—and did excellent work.

Later, to investigate the amount of loose talk which was going on in high military and social circles, I instructed the two society ladies and the official from the Air Ministry to chat with me and pass on what they had heard, just as if I were V—. The amount of highly secret and vitally important information that was bandied about in these circles was really incredible; and so, too, was the extensive harm such careless and stupid gossip could do. The guilty ones were all highly intelligent people, leading engineers, architects, officials and officers of the German Reich.

* A. H. has dreams of a coup d'état
filling everything up to
his nostrils.

THE MYSTER

Hitler's reactions to Hess's flight—Astrological influence towards astrology—Suspected pondeance with his wife

AFTER THE flight of R 1941, Hitler was morn that he was hardly cap Martin Bormann, until then the Party, made those advancement in the Fuehrer's confidence theory that Hess had 'become' clude this phrase in the first From the point of view of pc could never be remedied, fc be kept in such an important time if it were known that l

Here, too, Hitler's 'execut his element and without h powers, for which this occa Hess's staff, from chauffeurs Mueller would probably h: personnel too, as well as th who were responsible for th Though only a narrow circ never would have imagined were affected by these 'execu of the internal SD revealed t Rudolf Steiner and the anthr of arrests were made in the accordance with astrological tions and SD reports revea

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astrologers, seers, mediums, nature therapists, and so forth; consequently a series of collective arrests was also made among the ranks of these mystics. In point of fact, the great weakness he had displayed in this direction had been known for a long time.

From the day of his flight, so Himmler told me, the great interest Hitler had previously shown in astrology changed to an uncompromising antipathy. In my first conversations with Himmler about the Hess affair in May 1941, I said that I considered the German people much too intelligent for the story about his 'mental illness'. Himmler replied quickly, 'That was Bormann's influence.' After looking at me for a long time he added, 'It is too late to do anything about it now.'

Acow
I can still remember how upset Himmler was by the measures taken against the astrologists. And it was with satanic glee that Heydrich, in Himmler's presence, explained to Mueller in detail Hitler's orders concerning them. Heydrich, of course, knew of this weakness of Himmler's, and would often say to me, complaining about Himmler's indecisiveness, that the Reichsfuehrer had been looking too deeply into his horoscope again. Once during a telephone conversation with Himmler I heard Heydrich say, '... one is worried about the stars on the epaulettes, the other about the stars in the heavens. It's a question of who is the more difficult to work with.' At the same time Heydrich made a gesture to me, as though to ask whether he had not gone too far. He had taken care to say it as though he were speaking only of Hess, but Himmler understood only too well that it applied to him too.

It was after this telephone conversation that I received the order to complete a report which I was preparing for Hitler. In it I said that our secret information showed that for some years Hess had been influenced by agents of the British Secret Service and their German collaborators, and that they had played a large part in bringing about his decision to fly to Scotland. This was true more particularly of the decisive influence of a Professor G—, a gland specialist in Upper Bavaria.

At one of the conferences at that time, at which both Himmler and Heydrich were present, there was a general discussion of the Hess case. When I was asked my opinion, I said that though pathological causes might offer an explanation, for psychiatrists had

described Hess's condition circles which had been excluded from account, the explanation, and further in to clarify the matter. I with fanatical devotion, Hess strategic planning to the position to do so. Nor was he incapable of giving a command with which he had prepared in which he had carried it

As far as the imminent I thought that it might be in its context could act as seemed to me very doubtful to send a specific word of the first interrogation

For the rest, I believed the intimate friend, was, perhaps under Hitler's suggestive original conceptions and considered it his Messianic task would follow Hitler's command in 1939, and which He that the English were a breach it obligatory to preserve German born abroad, Hess during his youth and education, especially when dealing along the lines conceived by von Seeckt.

While I was saying all under the table and shook my frankness, and afterwards deal to learn. And I don't what you really meant.' But to me that my analysis was concerned, he took up

cluded within ten weeks. Heydrich's own and Hitler shared, was that military defeat the Soviet system that a subsequent infiltration would completely shatter it. Both Canaris and I of the military leadership was ludicrous, considered Heydrich's political theories ex- Indeed, Canaris's estimate of the political leadership was quite the opposite of fided to me, however, that he had been power- itel, his superior officer, to take this point of isted that the measures planned by Hitler were vreful that the Soviet system, no matter how shed, would not be able to withstand them.

estimates that the western Allies had made of he outbreak of the war, I felt convinced that e committing a similar error. I tried to point saying that perhaps it would be wiser to base probability that Stalin might be able to rein- of his party and his government, and that for n Russia would become a source of strength less. Heydrich stopped this line of discussion coolly, 'If Hitler orders this campaign, a ems will arise.' Another time he said to me, mentioned the same sort of idea to me just wo seem to be developing some remarkably our morning rides together.'

tempt to discuss the matter in May, point- hat even supposing him to be one hundred uld still be better, just as a precaution, to alities and prepare for other eventualities. put in my place. 'Stop your hypocritical, atist objections,' he said. 'You have no right

ed since whether the *a priori* rejection of all g from the Nazi leaders' fanatical belief in plans, or whether many of them did not ret, while denying them in discussion, fear- ight endanger their positions. The fact that

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so many of them made no provision at all for their personal security in case of a débâcle, suggests that the former was true, and that they had, in fact, a blind faith in Hitler's leadership. However, I am convinced now, as I was then, that Heydrich's intellect was too coldly calculating for him not to have thought out all the possibilities. Yet one never knew what was really in his mind. Thus, one day in the summer of 1941, when we were together at his hunting lodge, he remarked to me, apropos of the direction the war was taking: 'The way things are being handled by us, there must be a sticky end. Also it's sheer madness to have created this Jewish question.' The meaning of this reference to the problem of the Jews became clear to me only when Canaris told me after Heydrich's death that he possessed proof of Heydrich's Jewish ancestry.

Canaris's great nervousness at this time about a two-front war seemed to be an expression of his deep pessimism. In our conversations he jumped erratically from one subject to another—for instance, in the middle of a discussion on American bomber production, he would suddenly start talking about political problems in the Balkans. Sometimes his remarks were so elusive, so vaguely and obscurely couched, that only those who knew him well could understand what he was driving at. This was especially true of his telephone conversations. Once I jokingly remarked over the telephone that I thought I really ought to tell Heydrich and Mueller about this 'pessimistic' line of talk. 'Oh dear,' said Canaris, 'I forgot we were talking on the telephone.'

Towards the end of April 1941, Heydrich telephoned me at my office. He made several vague allusions to the approaching campaign against Russia, but noticing that I did not really understand what he was talking about, he said, 'Let's have lunch together, then we can talk this over quietly.'

We met at one-thirty in Himmler's dining-room. I had just come in when Himmler entered surrounded by a swarm of his personal staff. He greeted me benevolently, then took me on one side. 'You will have a great deal of work during the next few weeks,' he said. I answered, rather dryly, 'That would not be anything new, Herr Reichsfuehrer.' Himmler laughed. 'Well, Heydrich has a lot of things planned for you.'

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At dinner Heydrich discussed various problems in the Balkans, among them the question of liaison with various army commands, and asked me to discuss the matter with the proper Wehrmacht authorities. Then he began to talk of the Russian campaign. As I recall it, what he said was something like this:

'You were right—the Fuehrer has not been able to deal satisfactorily with the military and political problem of Britain. He now believes, as our air offensive has been a more or less complete failure, that Britain, given America's aid, might be able to speed up her rearmament. Therefore he's accelerating the build-up of our U-boat fleet. He aims to make our under-sea arm so strong that the Americans will be discouraged from ever actively coming into the war, because he realizes the danger of the USA co-operating closely with Great Britain.

However, he calculates that although Franco has refused to support us actively, we completely dominate the Continent, and you can rule out for a year and a half at least any attempt by the Western Allies to bring about decisive military action by an invasion. It's of the greatest importance that we make use of this period, and it seems to the Fuehrer that we can now attack Russia without the risk of our getting involved in a two-front war. But if this time is not made good use of, then one has to count on the certainty of invasion from the West, and in the meantime Russia would have grown so strong that we wouldn't be able to defend ourselves if she attacked us. Russia's preparations are so tremendous that at any moment Stalin could exploit any commitment of our forces that we may make in Africa or in the West; which means he'd be able to forestall any future action we may be planning against him. So the time for taking decisive action is now.

'The Fuehrer is convinced that the assembled power of the Wehrmacht is so enormous that the battle against Russia can be won and Russia conquered in the time we now have. But Germany will have to rely solely on her own resources, because the Fuehrer's convinced that the British, with their petty shopkeepers' souls, haven't a broad enough vision to recognize the Russian danger. Russia's demands on Finland and Bulgaria and Rumania, and their latest political intrigues in Yugoslavia, show that they'll

soon be ready to bring matter Stalin will soon be ready to join

'For anyone hoping to safety with the Soviet Union is inevitable. Therefore, it's better to stave can trust in our own strength. In their opinion we should be still getting ready for action so great that the campaign should last 1941 at the latest.

'The Fuehrer is well aware of the decision, and it's because of the smallest element of our strength allowed, he has insisted that all Civil Police are to be used. The Commander of the army. The but also in the front line as well wants the Security Police and then on protecting us against sabotage for guarding important persons general security of the rear area so-called "Rollbahnen". [The roads designed to carry the supply columns moving across plains.] 'Operations are expected because of the large number of fighting units of the Security Police so that they can be active in the fighting zone. All this has been carried out. It's an unusual situation aspects must be discussed in General. The Fuehrer has had occurred to me: this is the first time he's been engaged at the front; even the opportunity to prove himself should finally dispel the false executive departments are covered

had no understanding of the
not make things easier.

Mueller made his first open
of the organization. He urged
completely, to forgo a secret service
and to concentrate instead on
within the framework of AMT
movement.

me to report to him. He re-
sented and added sarcastically, 'He
official, after all.' He begged
very thoroughly, and then went
on the decision: after the Russian
to appoint you Deputy Chief of
will make you the Chief. This
was the most difficult one that
gave you time to consider the
you've done so, we'll spend an
but we can discuss the whole

gave me his hand. I left the
one hand, I was very happy to
for which I had waited so
that oppressed that it had been
from the very beginning I
that had been placed upon me. I
however, and it is understand-
overburdened with work,
my thoughts already begin-
ing work.

Heydrich, Mueller and me to
the most fashionable Berlin
he wanted to make a last
thaler against over-optimistic
it was typical of Canaris to
as an occasion for giving
of exceptional importance to
support against the optimistic

attitude of the Wehrmacht High Command, for it would be ex-
tremely helpful for him to be able to say: 'Heydrich too is not so
optimistic in his estimate of the situation.'

But Heydrich was not worried. He said, 'Yesterday at dinner
Hitler was in a very serious mood. Bormann tried to relieve him.
He said to him, "You are burdened with great worries just now—
the successful conclusion of this great campaign depends on you
alone. Providence has appointed you as her instrument for decid-
ing the future of the whole world. No one knows better than I do
that you have devoted the whole of yourself to this task, that
you've studied every conceivable detail of the problem. I am con-
vinced that you have planned everything thoroughly, and that
your great mission will surely succeed." The Fuehrer listened to
all this, and then said that one could only hope he would be proved
right in everything, and that in such a great enterprise one could
never know with certainty whether all eventualities had been fore-
seen. One could only hope so, and pray to providence that the
German people would triumph. All this,' Heydrich went on, 'was
reported to me by Himmler on the telephone this morning, and
it proves that the Fuehrer is not so optimistic as his military
advisers.'

At the end of Heydrich's remarks Canaris concluded the con-
versation by saying that Hitler's attitude was very noteworthy,
and in a way revealing.

At dawn the next day, June 22, 1941, the Wehrmacht began the
offensive on all sectors of the front, from the Black Sea to the
northern regions of Finland. In General Halder's diary is the
following entry:

'I have just described the plan for the Russian Campaign to the
Fuehrer; the Russian armies will be destroyed in six weeks. . . .'

That afternoon I received a telephone call from the Foreign
Office. They wanted me to take part in the negotiations on the
exchange of diplomatic personnel. At exactly the same time as the
Russian Ambassador, Dekanozov, with his entire staff and consul-
ar personnel, left Berlin, the German Ambassador, Count
Schulenburg, and his entire staff were to leave Moscow. The two
special trains were to meet at Svielengrad on the Turkish-Bul-
garian frontier, where the actual exchange was to take place. The

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strongly centralized authority of the Chief of the Security Police and the SD in the Central Office in Berlin? Terboven considered himself complete master of Norway, with unlimited authority to rule as he saw fit. The German police forces were to carry out his orders only. Directives from the central authority in Berlin were ignored or scoffed at; he alone was responsible to the Fuehrer for Norway. Himmler and Heydrich were of interest to him only as personal acquaintances. He could afford to act in this vainglorious and autocratic manner, since he had a very close relationship with Goering which went back to the time when Terboven was Gauleiter in the Ruhr—they had both had a hand in certain questionable transactions in which shares in the German steel industry were confiscated, ostensibly in the national interest.

The discussion quickly reached a deadlock and I was then invited to give my views, which I did, in spite of Terboven's latent—and later open—hostility. However, some progress was made and the meeting ended with Terboven declaring that he thought we could reach a mutually satisfactory solution.

In the evening there was an official dinner. Terboven saw to it that nothing was lacking, for in all things he aped his great patron, Goering. As we had foreseen, the party degenerated into a drinking bout. Terboven drank an incredible amount and forced all those around to keep pace with him. This was a favourite pastime of his. I felt so much out of place that I twice attempted to withdraw quietly, but did not succeed. Finally Terboven forced his two secretaries to ride about the room on bicycles, which was greeted with yowls by the drunken group. I remarked rather loudly, 'Quite a circus!'

Terboven must have heard me and had obviously been waiting for an opportunity to make a scene. He suddenly rose, came towards me, and said, standing very stiffly in front of me, 'Here, take this glass of beer—'. He held out a two-pint mug. 'Drink that down at once—you are malingering.'

I said that I was sorry, but because of my health I must decline. I had not even finished the sentence before Terboven tried to pour the beer over my face. But Heydrich intervened quickly and held him back, for which I thanked him. I remained for another five minutes, then left without a word.

Early next morning one of Terl on me and asked me to come over wanted us to have breakfast with the secretary, who gave me various curious life and customs at the ' quite sorry for her.

At first Terboven clumsily tried the party. 'It seems there was a night—but you see, Schellenberg much too sober.'

After breakfast there was another took part, including Mueller, while Terboven gave in all along the line sailing in Oslo Fjord.

The following day I was able to had planned to do. I was very in British Secret Service, which among the freedom-loving Norwegian resistance movement very military intelligence, as well as for been possible to infiltrate double information was to be gained, then think of to stimulate and encourage of betrayal had cost us valuable shortwave sets, and so on.

At that time the navy and the I for a shortwave meteorological setting it up really belonged to then had been warned to take prevention by the Norwegian resistance those Norwegians who had to maintain supply lines should be arrested as to Germany. This would be the Norwegian resistance from becoming was thought to be over-cautious right. Two attempts to install then much valuable time was lost. Finally and the shortwave transmitter was

Aug '41 #

prejudices towards all eastern questions, I could hardly hope to succeed in obtaining his final agreement. He was too much influenced by the ideas with which Hitler had imbued him during the last twenty years. I had given up discussing this question with Heydrich very early on. He had revealed to me quite openly the way his mind was working when he said, 'Be careful you don't get a medal from Stalin one day.' This was clearly a warning that he only wanted purely National Socialist conceptions used in propaganda work among the Russian prisoners.

I had some interesting discussions with two members of the Russian Army, one of them a General Staff officer, the other a corporal. Both of them were from Moscow, the one a professional officer, the other in civil life a hydraulic engineer. They had been taken prisoner at Bryansk in August 1941, and had gone through several phases of our training programme. Both had proved open-minded, intelligent and reliable, so they had been co-opted on to a special advisory board of Operation 'Zeppelin' in Berlin and sent to live in lodgings as ordinary civilians. Here I visited them with the chief of the section and a Baltic German, a well educated man who was an excellent interpreter and had already had many discussions with them. Through him, a lively and interesting conversation took place, stimulated by a supply of drink that we had brought with us.

There was a considerable contrast between these two Russians. The officer was a trained dialectician and a convinced Stalinist. The other man was only moderately influenced by the régime and admitted its shortcomings with a healthy realism. Both of them were firmly convinced that Russia would win the war. This conviction did not spring from the influence of the propaganda to which they had been subjected, but was a fundamental belief. Each of them based his conviction on different reasoning. The officer derived his from Stalin's superlative qualities as a leader and from the strength of the Russian Army. The other man, who thought in more primitive terms, said simply, 'You Germans will never be able to overcome the Russian people and the vastness of Russia. Even if you managed to give the various Soviet peoples their independence, this would only be a temporary step to the inevitable development of Communism.' He also said that a wave

of national feeling was sweeping as Kutusov, *A Life for the Czar* Moscow with great success. If successes to begin with, is the courage of the Russian people itself.

The officer spoke of what he of the Red Army. According to him as many as twenty to thirty the enemy deeper into the country the force of the Germans' attacks battles would be fought in the end under the iron severity of the law would eat up a great deal of the time would be highly vulnerable to the Russians would not let a petrol fall into the hands of the forces of nature, their own success the Russians, the Germans would new, well organized counter-attack.

After this conversation I was impressed by the simple manner of their opinions, which I had to read.

I reported these talks to Heydrich. Of course, it was not easy to follow successes had been so tremendous Russian State and people could organization as would be necessary course, whether Stalin possessed carry out such a plan, although the waffe had not yet struck at the west and east of the Urals.

Heydrich discussed the matter in his written report to show Hitler. It returned to me by Heydrich, who considered it to be complete nonsense not quite of the same opinion', should not risk burning our fingers.

brunner blamed Himmler for my favoured treatment and demanded that I should be subject to the same rules and discipline as the other heads of departments in the Reich Security Ministry.

My next interview with Himmler was a very rough one. He castigated all my experts, called the scientists of the Wannsee Institute, and especially their chief, Professor A—, agents of the NKVD. He attacked me too, and said the burdens of my post were obviously becoming too heavy for me and that I was beginning to fall under the defeatist influence of some of my assistants.

I could not suppress a smile at this, whatever it might have cost me. Himmler was so astonished by this reaction that he looked like a scared rabbit: he had never encountered insubordination of this sort before. But I could react in no other way. Psychologically it seemed to be the correct reaction, for it dissipated the dangerous tension. 'Enfant terrible!' Himmler said, with a shake of his head. And with that I knew I had won.

I then began quietly but forcibly to state my case. After two hours there was no longer any talk of arresting anyone. Instead, a thoughtful Himmler sat before me, chewing his thumbnail. 'Well,' he said, 'it would be terrible if you were right. Still, one cannot let intellectual considerations deflect one into showing weakness, there is too much at stake. If we don't manage to overcome the East this time, we shall disappear from history. I believe we should follow your conclusions only after we've won the war against Russia.'

'That's the decisive point,' I said, 'when to start on this new course. But I must repeat—if we don't start now we may never have a chance to start at all.'

In the end, I failed to convince Himmler. Still, I had succeeded in defending my assistants and the political line of my department. Today that may seem unimportant, even academic, especially for those who have never been embroiled in a war of nerves and cannot appreciate the inner excitement and disappointments one suffers. To decide to continue one's own line of policy in these circumstances required some courage, for Hitler's sensitivity and pathological suspicion rose in direct ratio to the deterioration of our general situation.

Combating Russian espionage
the Russian network—A spy
of a code—The Luftwaffe
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mine, not yours. He is, so to speak, the Benjamin of our leader-
ship corps, and therefore I shall give him my special support. I
have said this openly and in his presence because it accords with
the intentions of your murdered chief, and I consider Schellenberg
too intelligent to grow conceited because of what I have said. On
the contrary, I hope it will be a further incentive to him to work
carefully and industriously at the tasks assigned to him. If anyone
wishes to say anything further on this matter, or on any other
raised on this solemn occasion, he now has opportunity to do
so....'

There was an oppressive silence. I had felt relatively calm until
this moment, but now I began to blush—the more as Himmler
again took up his theme, saying that from now on he wanted me
to work closely with him, that he needed my abilities, and wished
me to report to him as frequently as possible. Then, rather
abruptly, he adjourned the meeting.

In the evening Himmler, accompanied by SS Obergruppen-
fuehrer Karl Wolff, again gathered all the leaders of the RSHA in
Heydrich's office. This time he made a speech in which he dealt
with the essential phases in Heydrich's personal development, and
pointed out to the SS leaders their obligations to the memory of
their dead chief. It should induce them to give the best of them-
selves in their conduct and their work. He ended with a reference
to the increasing importance of our work abroad, hoping that as
we developed our shortcomings and the gaps in our tradition
would be overcome, for our achievements in this special sector
still could not compare with those of the British Secret Service.
Therefore, our motto should be: 'My Fatherland, right or wrong'
—as well as the general motto of our order, the SS: 'My Honour
is Loyalty'.

At the memorial service in the Reich Chancellery which pre-
ceded the state funeral, orations were delivered by Hitler and
Himmler. It was a most impressive spectacle, which did full
justice to Himmler's gift for pageantry and drama. In their ora-
tions both Hitler and Himmler spoke of 'the man with the iron
heart'. I could not help thinking that with all the Ministers,
Secretaries of State, High Party officials, and family mourners,
the whole thing was like a Renaissance painting.

1941

Febr. '42#

XXXVI

THE DOWNFALL OF ADMIRAL CANARIS

A blunder by the Abwehr—Heydrich orders a surveillance of some Abwehr personnel—I sound Canaris on a leakage of information—A Catholic intrigue—Friction between Canaris and Heydrich—Administrative defects in the Abwehr—Canaris's dossier goes to Himmler—His campaign against Canaris—The Admiral's arrest ordered—He declines an opportunity for suicide—Our last meeting

BY THE end of February 1942 the position of Admiral Canaris was no longer secure. His friends and subordinates may not have been aware of it, but I knew that Hitler was seriously considering getting rid of him. His downfall was precipitated by an incident that assumed considerable importance in the battle of wits between technicians that was joined throughout the war.

Since the middle of 1941 we had put into operation a new device for defence against enemy aircraft. It had been developed with great skill by the technical department of the Luftwaffe and was being employed so extensively that our anti-aircraft defences were able to determine exactly the position and distance of all approaching enemy aircraft. This device, together with our highly developed automatic aiming devices, enabled us to inflict heavy casualties on the enemy, as all the main airlines of northern and western Europe were covered by it.

One of the most important installations from which it was operated was at Cap d'Antifer, near Le Havre. At midnight on February 27, 1942 a British Commando unit made a surprise raid on the installation. They succeeded in removing important parts of it and took photographs of other parts that could not be removed. After massacring the German garrison, they were able to withdraw with their booty. It can well be imagined that this daring and successful stratagem aroused no great enthusiasm in Hitler's headquarters. He was in a blind fury, and this time his

THE DOW

anger was justified, for serious shortcomings especially in the camouflage installation.

After brooding on Himmler and demanding the western Powers be plained bitterly about information on this subject.

The technical research report based on their tortured equipment. However, He demanded that Canaris's organization be fore him. As usual, Canaris was sealed.

This was the opportunity for a decisive attack on Canaris. My AMT VI would be the Abwehr—the Admiral Canaris. I said that at any additional response to their decision not to be for the time being.

Later on, when I admitted that my reluctance was no difference; it was not Canaris, but the Fuehrer and organization of a

The fact that I could not do more difficult for me. I was a man with many horses almost more than me, 'Schellenberg, and you see, my dachshund cannot say that of any

He was very good

Muscovites had created a little song to celebrate the German foreign minister:

*Spasibo Jasche Ribbentropu
Shro on otkryl akro w Jeworoy*

(Thanks to dear little Joachim Ribbentrop
for opening the window to Europe.)

It was a parody of an old verse about Peter the Great. For the moment, everything German was "ruled" popular in Moscow. There was even a Wagner concert.

The Lithuanian section of the Secret Protocol of 23-24 August was not signed until September 28, during a return visit to Moscow by von Ribbentrop.⁹⁵ Now all the Baltic states had been "donated" to Stalin. They would stay part of the USSR for over fifty years, with varying degrees of bitterness. In their hatred for Soviet Russia, many Baltic groups became fruitful recruiting grounds for the SS after the Russians were pushed out in 1941. Some of the most cruel Death's Head SS troopers, NCOs, and officers, the concentration camp guards, came from the Baltic republics. They were often found in the murderous Einsatzgruppen, the roaming SS execution battalions far behind the combat lines in Poland and Russia.

Certainly the ecstatic von Ribbentrop could never have guessed what Molotov said about him, once he had flown back to Berlin: "We were immensely pleased when we found out through his chatter how stupid the Reichs minister was."⁹⁶

On the flight home aboard the big Condor aircraft, Joachim von Ribbentrop was euphoric. He had been in Moscow only twenty-four hours, but he had concluded one of the world's most historic treaties;

The four-engine Condor was escorted by fighter planes of the Luftwaffe, because Polish anti-aircraft guns had begun firing at Luftwaffe planes.⁹⁷ To avoid Polish flak, the planes took a long loop out over the Baltic. Polish-German railroad connections had already been suspended, and war was near. They landed in Königsberg, where Erich Koch, the Gauleiter of East Prussia, hailed von Ribbentrop as a hero and presented him with an amber-encrusted case containing copies of all the treaties he had negotiated. Later, Hitler was amused to learn that all but one of these had long been broken.

Earlier that day, at 3 A.M., when von Ribbentrop had reported via telephone that the pact was signed, Hitler put down the phone, turned, and said, "It will hit like a bomb!" He hammered the wall with his fists and yelled, "Europe is mine! The others can have Asia!"⁹⁸

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with Yugoslavia. Seeing an opportunity to woo the Yugoslavs in February 1941, Roosevelt even sent Colonel "Wild Bill" Donovan to Belgrade.² When the angered Yugoslavs finally joined the Tripartite Alliance on March 24, 1941, it looked, Hitler said, "like a funeral."³

More trouble: the Japanese, whom von Ribbentrop had enticed into the alliance in the hope of keeping Roosevelt from threatening Germany, now caused unnecessary tension with the United States. When Matsuoka, the new Japanese foreign minister, had visited Berlin (the Berlin crowds loved to yell the melodic sound of his name: MATSUOKA), all seemed fraternal, but now Japan's policies were a disappointment to von Ribbentrop. The Japanese occupied French Indochina, thereby alarming the United States and raising some eyebrows in Berlin. After all, France and its colonies were Germany's beaten foes. Von Ribbentrop's memoirs even agreed with General George C. Marshall in his writings about Japan, and quoted him in English: "Japan acted unilaterally and not in accordance with a unified, strategic plan." Both of Germany's partners in the pact seemed bent on undermining its function and purpose ("*Starke Kräfte an der Aushöhlung der Automatik dieses Vertrages*"). Alas for von Ribbentrop. The French did not want to accept decent treatment, the Italians indulged in disastrous rampages in Greece and North Africa, and the Japanese brought the Americans closer to war on the Allied side. The senior generals of the Army had raised hell about the brutality of the Polish SS actions, the Spaniards did not want to risk their necks, and even the Duke of Windsor indirectly refused offers of money and friendship. Worst of all, the Russians were no longer the jovial friends of 1939.

The only one of his representatives von Ribbentrop could trust was Abetz in Paris. He was fed up with the old aristos, but the bureaucrats in the Foreign Office were proving difficult to discard. He had prepared retirement certificates for two hundred of them (including Kordt and von Weizsäcker), but the Führer had stopped him. Once again Adolf Hitler preferred dual teams.

By now, it must have occurred to von Ribbentrop that his diplomatic efforts were faltering, that the Führer would soon be ready to scrap his crowning achievement, the Moscow pact, and that the men of the Army and of the party were now in power. The Army conducted the war; the party ran the conquered territories. Where could diplomacy still play its part? He should have remembered April 17, 1940, when Stalin bitterly complained to him directly because German troops had occupied an oil region of Poland at Drohobycz in breach of the agreed demarcation line. When a mortified von Ribbentrop

April '41

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He was on the side of us in wartime they all's allies were fascinated diplomatic ones. Even active enemy, would not how precarious her d America, loomed as aggressive, Adolf Hitler eing inexorably drawn osevelt and Churchill. Only the forceful and erred Roosevelt from sh.

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bentrop remained too advertising slogans. By ul Socialist Germany's own days as a master

Russians. Those old the alliance with the von Ribbentrop, the ted Hitler that he had Lithuania were part of Secret Protocols. He pushed him into ap-haste.

o relax these tensions, nly a Soviet victim,

became another bone of Soviet-German contention. "In spring 1941 Hitler became much more negative about Russian questions," said von Ribbentrop's memoirs.⁴

On April 6, von Ribbentrop, attending a conference in Vienna, was ordered to join the Führer on the nearby train *Adler*. That day Hitler told his foreign minister that he had decided to invade Russia.⁵

The shaken von Ribbentrop offered to make one final attempt to defuse matters in Moscow; everything he had worked for was collapsing. But Hitler, in a fit of temper, prohibited any such move. "Discussion will rob us of the element of surprise!" he yelled. "One day the west will understand why I attacked the east!"

Hitler's reasoning was that the United States and Britain would soon combine to attack Germany with the Russians as their ally. Britain had already begun negotiations with Russia; Sir Stafford Cripps, the new British ambassador, had visited Moscow to work out a trade agreement. As far as Adolf Hitler was concerned, the time for negotiating with Russia had passed.

Like a shipwrecked sailor trying to bail out a leaking lifeboat with his hands, von Ribbentrop saw the water rise inside the hull. Control was slipping away. The Führer had decided on war. But first, some patching had to be done.

As expected, Mussolini's adventures had failed. The Greek campaign was a disaster, and the Libyan attack had turned into a debacle. Adolf Hitler, an angry, unwilling, I-told-you-so Adolf Hitler, had to come to his black-shirted ally's help. The whole thing was, as usual, dressed up in heroic terms. A directive announced on February 5: "Fighting shoulder to shoulder with our allies in the Mediterranean [German troops] must be conscious of their lofty military and political mission. They have been selected to lend valuable assistance in a psychological and military way to our allies who in every theater of war are struggling with a numerically superior army and who are insufficiently equipped with modern weapons because of Italy's limited productive capacity."

To run the campaign in North Africa, General von Brauchitsch chose the tough young Erwin Rommel, who was put in command of the DAK (Deutsches Afrika Korps). Rommel, a World War I winner of the Pour le Mérite, Imperial Germany's highest military decoration, was a modernist, a tank man, a blitzkrieg expert. He had once been the commander of Hitler's personal army guard battalion. Rommel was Hitler's sort of general: no title, no affectations, a tough, imaginative tactician and panzer soldier. He was a self-made man, without estates or noble ancestry, much like Richard Ribbentrop. On February

April '41

14, the first German combat troops landed at Tripoli.⁶ On February 24 near Agedabia, an advanced German unit ran into two troops of British armored cars from the Dragoon Guards and a troop of Australian antitank guns. The Germans destroyed one armored car, one truck, two armored reconnaissance cars, and disabled one armored car they then took in tow. A British crewman was killed in the skirmish. No German was killed or wounded. The action appears in the Wehrmacht report of Wednesday, February 26, 1941. The report adds that some British prisoners were taken.⁷ Rommel, who had wondered how his men would do in desert surroundings, had his proof. They would be fine . . . and so would he. Other Wehrmacht reports of that day noted that:

Over Malta, German planes shot down an RAF Hurricane.

Hull, Harwich, and Great Yarmouth were attacked, as well as airports in the east of Britain and factories in Ipswich and Norwich. An unsuccessful RAF attack on the Channel coast was repelled. Three RAF planes were downed. RAF bombers dropped high-explosive and incendiary bombs in western Germany, doing only slight damage. Flak shot down one RAF bomber. A U-boat sank an armed merchantman of approximately six thousand tons. Southeast of Britain, a British destroyer was sunk by a German torpedo boat.

It was a quiet day, but many men had died.

The fighting was going well for Adolf Hitler's soldiers, sailors, and pilots, but that left little room for Adolf Hitler's diplomats. Rommel had a "direct line" to the Führer in the person of Hitler's military aide, Colonel Rudolf Schmundt, who flew to Tripoli with him and then rushed back to the Berghof to report that Rommel was the perfect man for the job. Hitler congratulated himself on his brilliant judgment. "Anything Rommel wanted, anything at all . . ."

The historian David Irving reported Hitler's anger at Mussolini's arrogance and impotence. "The lunacy of it all! On the one hand, the Italians are screaming about their shortages of arms and equipment. On the other hand, they are infantile and find the use of German soldiers and equipment repugnant. Mussolini probably wants us to fight in Italian uniforms."⁸

It was the soldiers' year. Their days would wane, but in 1941 the soldiers outshone the diplomats.

Two months later, on Sunday, April 6, 1941, the Wehrmacht HQ announced:

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Division, usually garrisoned in Hannover, now on the northern end of Germany's Russian frontier.

At 3 A.M. on June 22, artillery prepared the way across the Niemen River, the border between East Prussia and the Soviets. German bombers began to pound the Russians at daylight. As soon as the fog lifted from the river valley, the brand-new 19th Panzer Division (it was originally infantry) crossed over the bridge into Russia. The time was exactly 9 A.M. The soldiers were far from their home in Hannover.

The division's senior Protestant chaplain, a husky man who wore the Iron Cross First Class and who had seen many battles through his round, steel-rimmed glasses, ate a hasty meal from his messkit and then climbed into one of the open, field-gray cars. A few hours later, he became the division's first fatality, when a bomb splinter sliced into him. Was it a bad omen? Not yet. The 19th Panzer Division was on its victorious drive east toward Moscow.

Hitler's life, and thereby the lives of those who orbited him, now shifted to his headquarters, the Wolfsschanze (Wolf's Lair), near Rastenburg in East Prussia.¹⁹ He had the notion that, as commander-in-chief, he had to be near the troops, although it was more a matter of emotion than geography. While East Prussia was somewhat nearer to Russia, the enormous and extended Russian front could have been coordinated from Berlin, in the eastern sector of Germany.

Perhaps it was the Nibelungen atmosphere of East Prussia that Hitler relished. Wolfsschanze was in one of the deepest, darkest, most oppressive forests in Germany, a gloomy evocation of the woods in the Grimm Brothers' fairy tales. The atmosphere was haunted, foreboding, and cheerless. Concrete barracklike buildings, with the insides shelled in plain wood trim, were made as livable as possible, but electric lights burned even at midday. Eventually, windowless above-ground concrete air-raid bunkers augmented the network of headquarters, connected by concrete passageways. The insides of all these thick-walled bunkers were damp and resounded to the constant whirring of air-circulation pumps. Those who worked in Wolfsschanze were prone to attacks of melancholy and depression, although there was a cinema, where even taboo English and American films were shown, along with the usual Goebbels-style newsreels. Of course, Wolfsschanze also had the latest in communications equipment.

This is where Hitler now received his foreign guests and his associates. Foreign guests were impressed, but they were there only occasionally. Von Ribbentrop, and the others around Hitler who spent much time there, were depressed.



Trials, writing in his

Aug '41

After a state visit by Mussolini to the Wolfsschanze on August 27, 1941, during which nothing was achieved except a flood of posed photographs and pompous communiqués, Schmidt reported a typical von Ribbentrop fight for the sake of his vanities.

A final communiqué on the Duce's visit was to be issued, dealing with the "heroic alliance" of the two Axis giants. The message that reached the departing Mussolini's southbound train said, "Dispatch canceled by order of the Reichs Foreign Minister," which sent Mussolini into a tantrum at von Ribbentrop's impertinence. He wanted the train stopped. He insisted on an immediate explanation. Then the original communiqué was reinstated.

Scene This is what had taken place behind the scenes. The first version ended with "Also participating in the military and political discussions were Field Marshal Keitel and Reichs Foreign Minister von Ribbentrop." Joachim von Ribbentrop's efforts to remain in command of his precarious status during the time of the generals now found pathetic expression. Infuriated that he was named after Keitel, he demanded that the communiqué be held up. The matter was quickly submitted to the judgment of the Führer, who howled about von Ribbentrop's vanity but gave in. When von Ribbentrop was told that Hitler had approved the change, he said airily, "Oh, leave it as it is." The part of the message Mussolini saw was an internal memo about holding up the communiqué until the order of precedence had been settled.

Von Ribbentrop's focus of attention should have been directed toward Martin Bormann, a squat, porcine man who was gaining power as "head of Chancellery" for the Führer. Bormann, an early Nazi and party factotum, had burrowed his way up from local power to Hess's office and then, after Hess's flight to Scotland, had become Hitler's creature. He held the strings to confidential purses and knew many secrets. In time, he would be the driving force behind the adoption of euthanasia, the antichurch campaign, and most anti-Semitic measures.

Earlier, Bormann had been helpful to von Ribbentrop in persuading Hitler to allow the removal of Gauleiter Ernst Bohle from the Foreign Ministry. Bohle, chief of the Auslandsorganisation, the Foreign Agency of the Nazi Party, was a constant irritant to von Ribbentrop. Bormann soon became everybody's distasteful key to the Führer's door.

The winds of war had blown away many of Joachim von Ribbentrop's favorite dreams. No longer could he forge alliances of powerful nations and bring diplomatic pressure to bear on those who would oppose Germany. No longer could he taste the triumph of successful

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diplomacy or feel pride when the old powers kowtowed to the new player on the diplomatic field. Now success was counted in men killed, prisoners taken, tanks destroyed, planes shot down, ships sunk. Maps were marked with the symbols of military units, with arrows of advance or retreat, not shaded into new colors by the horse trading of diplomatic negotiators. He had built a worldwide organization to deal with Germany's diplomatic business, but he feared that it would be dismantled by his warlord master. How could he make himself needed? What functions could the Foreign Ministry's staff of thousands now perform to please Adolf Hitler in war? Von Ribbentrop decided on an answer that would eventually be fatal for him. His commitment, probably made with the shielded eyes of the unquestioning disciple, was to order the Foreign Ministry to help with the so-called Final Solution.

It was not a sudden walk into quicksand. The whole thing began much earlier. Reinhard Heydrich, the Gestapo and SD Chief, "received his orders" from Reichs Marshal Göring to "find a *Gesamtlösung* [total solution] for the question of European Jewry."

Actually, according to the historian David Irving, Heydrich had drafted the entire order on a faked letterhead of Göring's and got the harried Reichs Marshal to sign it without much attention to detail, because Göring was rushing to meet his wife at the station.

On November 29, 1941, Heydrich wrote to Martin Luther, the von Ribbentrop import from Dahlem, now a senior official in the Foreign Ministry, requesting his help in the matter and enclosing a copy of the Göring "order."²⁰

Von Ribbentrop's first personal contact with this cruelty came through a department called Deutschland, which dealt with the Nazi Party aspects of his ministry. Von Ribbentrop had appointed Martin Luther, his Nazi Party "expert," to take charge of Department D (for Deutschland) with the rank of deputy state secretary. (Von Weizsäcker was state secretary or chief of staff.)

Luther, the clever, loud-mouthed Berliner, was ruthless and, like a lot of old party hands, almost anti-SS. He had always been loyal to the Proletarian SA, the brown shirts, and never got over the shock of the SS's execution of Röhm. Luther knew his way around the circle of "old fighters" close to the Führer. Most of them had been SA, and did not like Himmler or the SS.

The section of Department D that handled Jewish matters was DIII; its head was a former lawyer named Franz Rademacher. It was Rademacher who had once avidly furthered the Madagascar solution, until it dissipated in 1941. This was the first time that a branch of von

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Ribbentrop's ministry was directly connected with SS actions involving the Jews. (Madagascar was only meant for "western" Jews. "Eastern," that is Polish and Russian Jews, were to be handled differently.)

Luther's next contact was through the Einsatzkommandos in the Baltics, Romania, and Russia. The following Einsatzkommando reports are from the Foreign Ministry archives, collected by Hans-Jürgen Döscher.

- Sept. 1941 — The finishing of 4000 Jews in Jussy [Romania].
- Many snipers and functionaries, mainly Jews, were liquidated [Einsatzgruppe A, action near Riga, Latvia].
 - In the environs of Riga, 459 people were shot, among them were 237 mental patients from Riga and Migan. In all, in this territory 29,246 persons were liquidated.
 - The Jewish persons liquidated by one Sonderkommando increased to 75,000.
 - In the districts Roskiskis, Sarzai, Perzai, and Prienai, the figure of executed rose to 85,000. These districts are now cleansed of Jews.²¹

All of the SS-SD reports were passed on to the Foreign Ministry's Department Deutschland, Division DIII.

Dr. Georg Bruns, a lawyer for the ministry and a nephew once removed of von Weizsäcker, reported to Döscher in an interview on July 27, 1976, that Ribbentrop did not like to see the Einsatzgruppen reports passed through to the Foreign Ministry.²² Was it that von Ribbentrop knew the horror and wanted to sweep it under the rug? Was he himself horrified? Was it that he feared being compromised? Was it all of these? But it did him no good to try to dodge the issue. Heydrich would not permit it. After the first five Einsatzgruppen reports were ignored by the Foreign Ministry, Heydrich sent a personal report, Number 6, dated November 25, 1941, on Einsatzgruppen activities and their situation in the USSR, with a request for acknowledgment, and Dr. Bruns was forced to furnish such acknowledgment by the minister.²³

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There followed other atrocious reports, "The liquidation (*Liquidierung*) of 3000 Jews in Witebsk; more than 33,000 Jews executed (*hingerichtet*) in Kiev; 3000 Jews shot in Shtomir; east of the Dnieper River nearly 5000 Jews shot." One report states, "All male Jews over 16 with the exception of physicians and the elders." State Secretary von Weizsäcker (it is assumed a sickened von Weizsäcker) saw report Number 6 before Luther had a chance to show it to von Ribbentrop. Von Weizsäcker's initials but no marginal comments were on the report. Usually such communications are initialed by each reader.

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Though von Ribbentrop strenuously denied any knowledge of the murders — pointing to the official euphemisms "removal, resettlement, displacement" as proof that he never could have guessed they meant murders — how could he not have been aware of the horrors? The Einsatzgruppen reports were explicit enough.

It is entirely likely that for the first time in his career he withheld information from his wife. This is one matter in which she might not have been the "tougher of the two," as Hitler once said. By 1942, rumors of the murders were rife among senior Foreign Ministry officials, particularly because men like Martin Luther insisted that Einsatzkommando reports be widely circulated among those who were entitled to "classified" information.

The SD people charged with the task of killing considered themselves unsung heroes, patriotically doing the Reich's dirty work with iron resolve and a stomach for bloodshed.

Nothing in von Ribbentrop's background could have trained him for such bloody business. But like the man in the dinner suit who sees a derelict lying on a park bench, he hurried on to the dinner party. There was probably little he could have done to stop the SS murders; he was too involved, too committed, too dependent.

Axel von der Busche, who was to be one of the heroes of the officer resistance of 1943 and 1944, a man who volunteered to blow up the Führer by carrying a live grenade, tripping its mechanism, and embracing Hitler, told of the first time he saw an SS mass murder in the Ukraine. Von der Busche was an officer in an old regiment with nearby headquarters. "I suppose," he said, "the Christian thing would have been to take off my uniform and join the nude victims on their way to their execution. The SS would have arrested me, called me insane, committed me to a mental ward, and the executions would have continued the following day." This was the attitude of the SD. Once they had hardened themselves, most SD men and police behaved with the bored efficiency of the staff in a slaughterhouse. A few "weaklings" collapsed and were hospitalized.

This is how Germany returned to medieval laws:

Police order for Identification of Jews 1944 (August 1, 1941):

Paragraph 1: (1) Jews who have completed their sixth year of life are not permitted to appear in public without displaying a Jew Star.

(2) The Jew Star must be the size of the palm of the hand, a six-pointed, black star on yellow background with the black word *Jüde* (Jew). It is to be worn in open view on the left side of the chest, sewn on in a permanent manner.

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- Paragraph 2: Jews are prohibited from
- (a) leaving their residential district without carrying written police permission;
 - (b) wearing orders, decorations, or other insignia [to prevent decorated World War I veterans from getting sympathetic treatment].²⁴

These regulations did not apply to a few "mixed" (intermarried) categories or to those who had lost a son in the current war. (Men who were one-quarter Jewish could serve in the Wehrmacht, depending on the distinction and war service of their fathers.)

They were followed by another from the Reich's Finance Ministry, dated November 4, 1941. Any Jew who was not employed in enterprises vital to the German economy would be removed (*abzuschieben*) to the "eastern territories." Their money would be confiscated by the Reich. Each Jew was to retain a hundred marks and fifty kilograms (110 pounds) of personal luggage.

The return to the dark ages, the failure to acknowledge the rights of individuals, which had begun on January 30, 1933, was now in full progress while Germany's sons were bound for the immense, snow-covered steppes where Napoleon's Guards had once frozen to death.

More of these regulations were added with frequency by various branches of government. They could not have been ignored or overlooked by professional officials like those of the Foreign Ministry. In fact, if the rules seemed in any way suspect or especially harsh, the old hands made sure that they were distributed as widely as the "secrecy" classifications permitted, usually upward. These men may have suspected that one day they would have to prove that the guilt was shared by their chiefs.

The Russian campaign began with a vast rout of the Soviets. By July 9, 1941, German troops had taken 320,000 Russian prisoners; by October, the figure had risen to 1.2 million.

In North Africa, Rommel and his new Afrika Korps were still on their triumphant advance after their April defeat of the British at Bardia, Derna, and Halfaya inside Egypt. Not until December was Rommel to suffer a setback, but it was only temporary. By January 1942, he was back on the attack.

This was not the case in Russia. The Moscow government had moved to Kuibyshev, but the German attack ground to a halt on December 1, sixteen miles from the Kremlin.²⁵ By then, German losses in the campaign were 158,773 dead, 31,191 missing, 563,082 wounded. Aircraft lost numbered 2093. The Russians blocked the

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way with fresh troops released from their eastern areas by the Japanese nonaggression agreement. Germany's diplomatic loss, with this treaty, meant a loss of lives. But that was no longer in von Ribbentrop's hands. All he could do was listen to the reports of the military. On December 5 and 6, 1941, the Russians launched a massive winter offensive against German troops, who were ill equipped to handle such an attack in 50-degree-below-zero weather in their summer uniforms. Back in Germany people were asked to contribute their fur coats. The lack of winter combat gear was a scandal.²⁶ It was the first time the German foot soldier, the *Landser*, was to taste the bitter brew of Hitler's personal strategic command. Stalled on the rim of Moscow that December, 286 German tanks were lost, 305 artillery pieces and their tractors. Men retreated in near panic for a hundred miles in 50 degrees Celsius below zero. The myth of German invincibility was gone.²⁷

On December 19, Marshal von Brauchitsch, the official commanding general in Russia, was discharged without so much as a handshake, and Hitler took personal tactical as well as strategic charge. Now, behind his back, Hitler was often called the *Gröfaz* (pronounced in English *Growfutz*). It sounds as slanderous in Berlinesse as it does in English. *Gröfaz* is an acronym meaning "the greatest warlord of all time."

Within hours of the beginning of the Russian offensive, Japanese aircraft carriers launched their attack on Pearl Harbor, and the United States declared war on Axis partner Japan. The fat was in the fire. Now the tripartite treaty would oblige Hitler to declare war on the United States, the very thing von Ribbentrop had tried for so long to avoid. It was a diplomatic shambles.

The Führer's aggressive plans had wrecked von Ribbentrop's grand design. The Russians now had fresh troops because, safe from attack by Japan as a result of the Matsuoka-Molotov treaty of April 4, they could move up eastern forces. The United States, whom the Germans had wanted to keep out of the war, was attacked by Japan because the Japanese felt safe from Russia. How to explain all this to Italy? Or was it worth explaining anything to Italy? According to Ciano's diary, the Duce had already said he hoped that the Germans would "lose a lot of feathers" in Russia.²⁸ In his memoirs von Ribbentrop insisted that neither he nor Ambassador Oshima had an inkling of the impending carrier attack on the American fleet in Pearl Harbor. If so, Ambassador Oshima must have felt deeply betrayed by Tokyo, and his urge to commit *seppuko* (the thing foreigners called *harakiri*) must have been strong.²⁹

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Meanwhile, Heinrich Himmler's empire, the dark world of the SS, held sway. Vengeance was theirs. A large number of Foreign Ministry department heads held SS rank, ranging from major to general, although it was often the "honorary rank," given at the request of von Ribbentrop. The bestowal may have been only a gesture, but it provided Himmler with a tool. Even "honorary" SS were, after all, SS.

In Russia, the SS continued its rampage. At the beginning of the war, orders had been given to shoot without trial any Soviet commissars captured with the Russian Army. This so-called Commissar Order provoked resentment among German officers, who considered it against their code. But that was only the beginning. Rudolf Christoph von Gersdorff, an officer of traditional Prussian background, told a story about the staff of the Middle Army (Heeresgruppe Mitte), with headquarters a few miles from Smolensk.

A Silesian friend, Nanne von Heydebrand, came into my room, chalk-pale. I thought he had been airsick on the flight to headquarters, so I offered him some brandy. He told me that the JU-52 transport that brought him back to the front from home leave had made a stop at Borisov. He heard pistol and machine gun fire near the airstrip. When they took off, they flew at low altitude over a dreadful execution scene. Thousands of people, probably Jews, had dug deep ditches and were then shot with machine guns and pistols. The next shift had to step on top of the fallen, dead or alive, and they were shot in their turn. Also, babies and naked women, begging for their children. Everyone died in a hail of bullets.

The SS men, it turns out, were Latvians. The matter was investigated and found to be true. Commander-in-chief General von Bock ordered the field commander of the Borisov area to report to him at once. The man shot himself on the way to headquarters.

This massacre and others like it inspired the nucleus of officers who planned to kill Adolf Hitler.³⁰ Many of them belonged to Potsdam's legendary 9th Infantry Regiment, which was descended from the Kaiser's Guards Regiments. Many officers of the 9th were the sons of the Kaiser's Guards officers. And many were to die after their attempt to kill the Führer on July 20, 1944, when Colonel Claus von Stauffenberg tried to blow up Hitler but did not succeed. By then, the attempts on Hitler's life in the eleven years between 1934 and 1945 numbered forty-two.

The acts of the Einsatzgruppen, scavenging after combat troops had passed, were only a primitive first attempt. Soon the SS prepared more efficient ways to eliminate such undesirables as Jews, homosexuals, Gypsies, Freemasons, Jesuits, Poles, Jehovah's Witnesses, the

terminally ill, and *Nacht und Nebel* [the other groupings. The fancied enmity to the Ravensbrück, was for prisons for political turned into death camps, and disease was "natural" deaths.

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terminally ill, and the mentally disabled. (One new category was *Nacht und Nebel* [Night and Fog], prisoners who fitted none of the other groupings. They were arrested without warning for any true or fancied enmity to the Reich. For example, one of the original camps, Ravensbrück, was for women only.) The camps, which had begun as prisons for political opponents, became cruel labor camps. Many were turned into death camps. The mortality rate from overwork, starvation, and disease was immense, but the killing factories dwarfed these "natural" deaths.

Lest the Army be portrayed as totally averse to the Einsatzgruppen debauch, it should be noted that certain Army commanders, either opportunists or Nazi believers, approved SD actions. In an order to the 6th Army Group, Field Marshal Walter von Reichenau told his troops that "they were the standard bearers of an inexorably popular concept" and that they "must have full understanding for the necessity of this severe but justified atonement required from the Jewish subhumans."³¹

One Einsatzgruppe reported that Army Group Center had liquidated nineteen thousand "partisans and criminals," mostly Jews. There were so many requests from local commanders for liquidation by the Einsatzgruppen that an SS major named Lindow felt constrained to point out that "the Gestapo was not the Wehrmacht's hangman."³² When the murders were dressed up in governmental definitions, Nazi cant, Hitler's views, Army orders, oaths of office, "honor of loyalty," even decent men were capable of seeing the victims as criminals, justifying the urgency of war to circumvent morality.

Most of these acts were primed in Berlin by officials dubbed "desk murderers." At the other end of the disaster was the expectation by the SS that they could appeal to their members on the basis of duty and honor. ("You must be hard. Your task is one of unparalleled hardness.") Ideologically, the murders were described as "cleansing, surgical" acts. "Judaism in the east is the source of Bolshevism and must therefore be wiped out in accordance with the Führer's wishes." The Einsatzgruppen believed they were entitled to the sympathy and thanks of all good Aryans. "The job is not a pretty one," complained SS General Harald Turner.³³ To support the legality of it all, this was the particular vocabulary for murder: "special action," "special treatment," "elimination," "cleansing," "resettlement," "relocated elsewhere."

Not all SS functioned the way Heinrich Himmler and Reinhard Heydrich wished. Several top SS leaders requested transfers from Einsatzgruppen duties. Among the best known were SS General Nebe,

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wanted to "preserve" the German diplomatic service for postwar Germany, though he obviously misjudged the extent of the world's bitterness toward that service. Like the British colonel in *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, he tried to save the fruit of his men's work, even if it served the Nazi enemy. In carrying out his bitter duties, he could not help signing papers and orders of atrocious content, often the outcome of Under Secretary Luther's collaboration with the SD. Luther's allegiance toward those who executed the Final Solution was maintained at the request of the insecure von Ribbentrop, to "help [him] preserve the Wilhelmstrasse." Originally, von Weizsäcker, like the Kordt brothers and other professionals whom von Ribbentrop had brought into the ministry, was tainted as a "Ribbentrop creature," but by 1942 he had gained the respect of the staff and had the confidence of anti-Hitler people in other ministries. Still, no matter how strenuously he tried to distance himself from von Ribbentrop and to block the party collaboration of Luther's Department Deutschland, he himself had to slog through the mud of the regime. His initials on deportation orders, which became virtual death orders, would haunt him to his last days.

Decency was not enough, but revolt was suicide. It is unlikely that von Weizsäcker was more afraid of death than any other patriot, but if he died, who would act as buffer for the "helpless" ministry officials? This, in all probability, was at the base of his misjudgment. It was also the direct result of the creed of German officialdom: Obey! If von Weizsäcker could have convinced himself that each and every official of the ministry was individually responsible for the fate of Germany, he could have climbed down from his precarious perch.

The blinkers worn by many members of Germany's diplomatic service were astonishing. For instance, Dr. Paul Schmidt, who had been an official and chief interpreter of the ministry for over twenty years, since early Weimar days, said about the bombing of his native Berlin: "I had listened to Goebbels's jubilant announcement in the fall of 1940 of the bombing of London with a heavy heart. Now, after the bombings of Berlin, I would be able once more to look my English friends in the eye."⁴⁷ He considered Berlin's suffering in the bombings a kind of atonement for the evils it had inflicted on Britain: "They could take, and we could take it." He failed to take account of the absolute revulsion German murders and atrocities had caused in the outside world, barbarities that could never be sanitized or erased by the bombardment of cities. After all, the original bombings of Warsaw, Rotterdam, and London had brought their own cruel reward, but

he did not see that killed by the Einsatzgruppen. Joachim von Ribbentrop's Führer was stronger, but the Führer's foreign policy. That Berlin, von Ribbentrop disliked but could not trust. Von Ribbentrop's future. Personally, I was in the Waffen SS. Anneliese was his firstborn.

Following the Anschluss, the meeting in Munich, Laval, and Ciano's government area to actual proclamation: Wehrmacht cooperated with the African possessions: Corsica and Tunisia. Hitler to avoid soon left the meeting quiet.⁴⁸

When Göring's response to help Laval, Laval said, "I can still see French prisoners there was another Prussia. Göring agreed with Mussolini: "Stop at least a few men and assist the Italian troops at Stalingrad, and I would have no reason to doubt Ribbentrop. Such a situation would be a disaster for Germany."

As part of the plan for the Final Solution, Dr. Schmidt was dispatched as German ambassador to Rome, became one of the original members of the Foreign Office, and had then become

called by the familiar *du*, Heinrich Himmler, was no longer a friend. All that remained were people like the weak-willed Steengracht, now state secretary. Even the Führer kept the von Ribbentrops at arm's length. Only their children were a genuine source of affection and pride. Rudolf had been awarded the Knight's Cross.

Hammer blows kept raining on Germany. On June 4 Rome fell to the Allies. On June 6 Rommel, who was in command of the Seventh Army on the Channel coast, was home in Germany, feeling reassured that there would be no invasion. It was too unlikely, considering that the Navy had predicted rough seas in the Channel and the meteorologists looked for poor flying weather. There was no reason Rommel would not have visited his home in Herrlingen before keeping a rendezvous with Adolf Hitler in Berchtesgaden. Rommel's only son, Manfred, was also in uniform, a private soldier in the Air Force, and Rommel longed to see him. Then, despite the adverse conditions, in the ugly, stormy dark, at 1:30 A.M. on June 6 came the invasion. The Wehrmacht's report, usually so laconic, began that day in 1944 with a trumpet call.

Special Report! *Sondermeldung!* The long-expected attack by the British and North Americans against the French coast began last night. A few minutes after midnight, after a heavy bombardment, enemy airborne troops landed in the Seine estuary. Other troops were landed from the sea.²⁰

One can only guess what it meant for heavily armed and equipment-laden American and British soldiers to dive out of their Douglas C-47 transport planes to face the stormy unknown, eight hundred feet below, in hedgerow-gridded Normandy. Others waded through rough surf. The report also told of the landings on the obstacle-strewn and mined beaches and of bitter fighting.

How could von Ribbentrop in Fuschl have guessed at the blunders that followed, precipitated by the Führer's personal habits and the fear he instilled in everyone near him, even in generals who had been decorated for bravery? When the invasion was still balanced between success and disaster, Hitler was asleep and could not be disturbed.

From Fuschl to the Berghof is only a short drive, but even if von Ribbentrop had known the true nature of the events, it is unlikely he would have awakened the Führer. The days when he would have braved Hitler's fury had long passed. He was to record in his memoirs that in 1941 he had once violently disagreed with Hitler, who had clutched his heart and feigned a coronary crisis. "Don't ever do that to me again, Ribbentrop; disagree with me so vehemently." Von Rib-

July '44, 1941

betrop, guilt-ridden, never forgot it. In fact, the image lasted until the very end, when he told the Nürnberg prison psychiatrist that killing Hitler would have been "like killing my own father."

At 6 A.M. Rommel's chief of staff, General Hans Speidel, called Rommel at his home in Germany. The night had been wasted because General Gerd von Rundstedt thought the Normandy attack was only a feint. Since Allied fighter planes dominated the skies, Marshal Rommel, like all senior officers, had been forbidden by Hitler to fly. So he drove back as fast as he could, arriving in Normandy late in the afternoon after canceling his Berghof visit.

That day Hitler slept until 3 P.M. This meant that certain available panzer divisions, which might have quashed the invasion on the beaches, could not go into action. No one could commit them without Hitler's express permission. At 4:55 P.M. on June 6 Hitler issued an impossible order from the Berghof that "the beachhead must be cleaned up no later than tonight."²² Of course it could not be done. The bridgeheads were held and consolidated.

William Shirer reported that General Speidel remembered Rommel later forced Hitler into a showdown in northern France near Soissons. They met on June 17 in a concrete bunker that had once been built as advance Führer headquarters for the victory in France. Rommel came straight to the point. "The battle is hopeless. Let us take the troops back and regroup beyond the naval guns." The western campaign was lost, as was that in the east. Make peace! Hitler's cold reply was "Just take care of your invasion front. I shall take care of the future of the war."

On June 20 the Russians launched their next offensive and von Rundstedt was fired after telling Keitel to "make peace, you fool!"

Disastrous news was to follow. Trying to crisscross his patched-up command, Rommel was gravely wounded on July 17 when his staff car was machine-gunned on a Normandy road by an Allied fighter plane. His skull was fractured in several places. He was never to recover completely, robbing the von Stauffenberg group of a great central figure, who, if healthy, might have salvaged that effort and achieved some semblance of success.

The attempt on Hitler's life code-named Valkyrie, after the Nordic goddesses who floated high above a battlefield to point at those who were to die, finally took place on July 20, 1944, at the Wolfsschanze in Rastenburg. The bomb, set to go off at a conference table, killed and hurt several senior generals, but Hitler was only superficially wounded. The combination of circumstance and sheer incompetence was overwhelming and has been endlessly discussed since that day.

Probably the central elements; these co at the Wolfs: revolt faltere The SS kept l his headquar Mussolini, n more so.

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1940, and with decreasing medical pretense²⁷¹—then from concentration camps as well beginning in March 1941, and with decreasing regard for fitness to labor.²⁷² In July 1941 the mass execution of Jews and of derivative political and racial enemies began behind the German battle lines in Russia as provided by a directive of Hitler's of the previous 13 March.²⁷³ Then on 24 August Hitler called off the Euthanasia program as of that fall.²⁷⁴ Over the following months Bouhler and Brack stepped up the removal of Jews from the concentration camps to the gas chambers while also transferring Euthanasia equipment and personnel piecemeal to Poland for the Final Solution.²⁷⁵ On invading Poland in September 1939 Hitler had ordered Jews from the Reich massed in a few specified Polish cities having good rail connections—for "the final aim," which was "to be held strictly secret" and "will take some time," as Heydrich told SS commanders on 21 September (that was not the open aim of a Jewish reservation).²⁷⁶ Jewish egress from all German-controlled Europe was halted in 1941—stark proof that "the final aim" was not a last recourse. Once the Final Solution was under way in its Polish compound, Hitler's involvement in its details slackened even as its implementation gradually passed from the Kanzlei des Führers to the SS. Thereafter Hitler applied himself instead to extending its compass to Germany's satellites—by diplomacy so long as this availed. When his Reich was collapsing he boasted: "We have lanced the Jewish abscess."²⁷⁷ And he managed some positive thinking against all odds: "In a world that will be increasingly infected by the Jewish poison, a people immunized against that poison must prevail in the long run."²⁷⁸ He had meanwhile refuted with a vengeance his postulate that Germany's 1918 defeat, being the Jews' doing, would be undone by their undoing. That refutation covered the subpostulate that his mother's death was Bloch's doing.

The secret sense of Hitler's secret Euthanasia program as he initially framed it at the Nuremberg Rally was to rectify 1907 with a mercy killing of his incurably sick mother by Bloch that would, incidentally, obviate wasteful expense. But through the program as he applied it he identified himself in Pasewalk with

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ceased with the start of hostilities in Europe. Hitler first whispered about setting up a secret Euthanasia program in wartime just as he was striking a pose of moderation toward the Jews during the drafting of a racial law at the Nuremberg Party Rally of September 1935.²⁵⁹ Here already, then, his radicalism toward the Jews was rechanneled into Euthanasia.²⁶⁰ In the spring of 1939, in a prologue to the program proper, Hitler seized on a parental request for an infant that was blind and "seemed idiotic" to be put to death.²⁶¹ That summer he already began instructing his future operatives.²⁶² Late the following October he signed a personal order backdated to 1 September 1939, when his Polish war had started, charging Philipp Bouhler, chief of the Kanzlei des Führers (his private office), and Karl Brandt, his senior attending physician, with administering the selection of "incurables" for "mercy killing."²⁶³ Orally he restricted the order to mental incurables.²⁶⁴ Theirs were lives not worth living, he explained in briefing sessions—and besides, medical resources ought to be economized in wartime.²⁶⁵ He excluded Jews and the mental casualties of World War I—contradictorily, in that by the one exclusion he implied that Euthanasia was a benefit and by the other he implied the opposite.²⁶⁶ The mechanics of the killings were administered by Viktor Brack of the Kanzlei des Führers: a commission from Berlin arrived in Grafeneck on 17 October 1939 to set up a gas chamber there while the chief of Stuttgart's criminal police was devising one independently in Brandenburg.²⁶⁷ Hitler himself ran the program closely at the outset through oral instructions.²⁶⁸ As the means of killing he prescribed gas in early October, with a tentative choice of carbon monoxide in November that he finalized after eighteen or twenty victims died swiftly, painlessly, and unsuspectingly in a first experiment in Brandenburg early in January 1940.²⁶⁹ He required that doctors only should pull the gas levers. Throughout he saw watchfully to the exclusion of the war casualties: early in 1941 he ordered some rumored slip-ups investigated at once (it turned out that the mental condition predated the war service in every instance).²⁷⁰ But Jews were, on the contrary, removed from mental institutions to the gas chambers beginning in the summer of

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1941

Jewry itself in Germany with full sharpness⁽²⁵⁴⁾ and farther back 1933
 to his pre-Putsch scheme for holding the Jews hostage.²⁵⁵ The
 prophecy was also designed to spread the guilt across those
 closed borders for the annihilation to come. It was inherently
 contradictory. If the democracies' borders were closed to the
 Jews, then for the democracies the Jews were no hostages. Or if
 the Jews were strong enough in the democracies to plunge them
 into a war against Germany for the sake of their own "interests"
 and "Old Testament vengefulness,"²⁵⁶ then they would open up
 the democracies' borders first. Either way, the war that then
 came with those borders still closed was no "Jewish war." But
 the prophesy was cynical anyhow, as only eleven days later
 Hitler told a military group that "he must wage war . . . soon" for
 "a) mastery of Europe, b) world mastery for centuries."²⁵⁷ He
 nonetheless called that war a Jewish war to the last, as when in
 February 1945 he claimed that, before it, he had faced up to the
 "problem" of the Jews "by chasing them out on all sides in order
 to cleanse the German world of the Jewish poison. For us," he
 added, "this was an indispensable disinfection treatment under-
 taken at the last minute. . . . With this operation a success in
 Germany, we had a chance it would spread. It was even bound
 to, since health normally prevails over disease. The Jews were at
 once alert to this hazard, which is why they decided to go all-or-
 nothing and launch a fight to the death against us. They had to
 bring down National Socialism at whatever price, even should
 the planet be destroyed. No war was ever so typically or so
 exclusively a Jewish war as this one."⁽²⁵⁸⁾ This rationale of his
 prewar Jewish policy only compounded its illogic. For its
 avowed result was not that "health" prevailed over "disease" in
 the democracies (as it was "bound to"), but that the democracies
 were incited to a "fight to the death" against Germany—which
 was cleansed of the "Jewish poison" and yet succumbed in a
 purely "Jewish war." But psychologically the inconsequence
 was consequent. As in 1907, so, now again the "operation" left a
 residue of "infection" within Germany to be poisoned out in that
 losing "fight to the death."

The transition to this poisoning-out was provided by the Eutha-
 nasia program, launched even as the expulsions practically

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the uncompromising fight against Communism," and in July 1936 that the Bolshevik threat could be met only by a dismemberment of the Soviet Union.⁴⁹ On 2 June 1940, with France falling, Hitler told an army headquarters group in Belgium that he expected a "reasonable peace settlement" with Britain that would free him "at last" for his "great and proper task: the showdown with Bolshevism."⁵⁰ Only when Barbarossa was mounted, however, did Hitler reopen in full that parenthesis of 22 October 1922—"(witness Russia)"—which had followed his assertion that the fight against Bolshevism was a "life-and-death struggle between two world views." On 30 March 1941, in handing down Barbarossa to 200–250 assembled army commanders, he called the upcoming eastern war "a struggle of two world views against each other" and pursued: "The struggle must be waged against the poison of decomposition. . . . What is involved is a struggle of annihilation."⁵¹ Then, while he ordered the army to kill captured Communist officials (the "Commissar Order"), Heydrich instructed his SS henchmen that "eastern Jewry is the intellectual reservoir of Bolshevism and in the Führer's view must therefore be annihilated."⁵² With the start of the invasion, secret instructions went out to the press to switch its tack to "the annihilation of Bolshevism" and some days later to the link between Bolshevism and Jewry.⁵³ Living space had taken second place.

The immediate source of Hitler's "feeding ground" rationale for repeating Germany's eastern conquest of 1917–1918 was that conquest itself, specifically the establishment of a satellite Ukraine from which a starving Germany expected bread that never came.⁵⁴ He could even justify his new war as necessary to prevent that starvation from recurring in a new war⁵⁵—truly an argument from hunger. (Fittingly, his own attempt to exploit the Ukraine was to prove more counterproductive than Ludendorff's of 1917–1918.⁵⁶) Hunger as a military and political weapon appears to have been the opening theme, filling two out of eleven pages, of his outline for "Workers and Peace Treaties," the speech resembling his "Versailles and the German Worker" of 31 May 1921.⁵⁷ In both speeches the "land and soil" gained and then lost in 1917–1918 was his basis for deploring the outcome

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ceeded as he proposed, from reversing the German "domestic situation" to rearming for German expansion. And Jewry was not wiped out beforehand; it was separated out meanwhile. The military themselves were fooled on the whole, and increasingly, right down to the decisive juncture. "In the preparation of the attack against the Soviet Union and during its initial phase . . . cooperation between Hitler and the military leadership attained a maximum of unison. Working from a supposed consensus on goals between themselves and Hitler, most of the higher officers had not realized that . . . only an ancillary function fell to militarism by the terms of the radical universal anti-Semitic racial doctrine that determined policy as a whole and that was now, in 1941, to be translated into full-scale reality."³⁸ This was the harder to realize inside or outside the army since Hitler did not divulge his priorities before then. An exception that proves the rule was made for the Italian ambassador as an angry Hitler told him on 21 March 1933, in rejecting Mussolini's representations against an impending boycott of Jewish businesses: "I do not know whether my name will be held in high esteem in Germany two or three hundred years from now for all that I hope to be able to do for my people, but of one thing I am absolutely certain: in five or six hundred years the name of Hitler will be glorified everywhere as the name of him who will have extirpated the pestilence of Jewry from the world once and for all."³⁹

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In presenting the destruction of Jewry as a worldwide imperative concurrent with the fight for feeding ground, Hitler's secret rationale of 1928 had been more nearly forthright than his oratorical means-end conjunction of the two. But this conjunction did put the means first in time, and that was more than mere precedence in that the means was false. In no way could removing Jews be expected, for all Hitler's talk, to conduce to conquering land. That talk was like a tacit assurance beyond his expansionist program itself—and beyond his person, first known throughout Germany from his Putsch fiasco—that with him in charge of the means, the end would fail. Tacitly again, his naming Jewry's devices (democracy, Marxism) in place of Jewry itself as the national evil to be rooted out only signified to Germany that

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Semitism once they came into full action together:⁶⁰ his rhetorical reversal of means and end was unreversed in practice. Ostensibly, however, to increase German power was all along the objective that Hitler pursued in eliminating Jewish influence and then Jewry itself from Germany. Either way, the two tracks ran wide apart in his mental landscape. On the Jewish track it was axiomatic that the Jews would, and then did, cause a new world war. But on the German track that war was expressly, even ostentatiously, his. His it was par excellence in his briefing sessions with political and military aides. Hardly had he prophesied on 30 January 1939 that a new war begun by Jewry would mean the end of Jewry in Europe⁶¹ when he told a gathering of army commanders that he must go to war soon because he was aging and "the others" were arming.⁶² Here for once his anti-Semitism fronted for his expansionism.

Hitler did not scrap his old means-end formula when he launched Barbarossa. Nonetheless Barbarossa signaled an ascendancy of his ideological style, recessive until then, over his power-political style, previously dominant.⁶³ His style in this German line was ever Machiavellian and in his own line fanatical.⁶⁴ True, before 1941 he imposed on his racist policy a semblance of pragmatism backed by cunning. On 29 April 1937 he told a gathering of Nazi district leaders, by way of justifying a tactical slowdown of his moves against the Jews: "I don't want to start an opponent fighting right away by force, I don't say 'Fight!' because I feel like fighting, but I say 'I will destroy you! And now Shrewdness, help me maneuver you into the corner without your making a single thrust, and then you get the thrust straight to the heart.' That's it!" But he delivered himself of this Machiavellian rhetoric in a telltale crescendo of frenzy.⁶⁵ The change in his controlling style from Machiavellism to fanaticism with the start of his war proper in the spring of 1941 was in effect foretold in a passage of *Mein Kampf* about workers deserting Marxism for the national cause in the August days of 1914: "But now was the time to proceed against the whole fraudulent fellowship of these Jewish nation-poisoners" and "make short work of them without the slightest regard for any clamor or

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lamentation that might arise. . . . All of the instruments of military power needed to be ruthlessly employed for the extermination of this pestilence."⁶⁶ Here already, in this inverted prophecy, the terminal action against the Jews starts punctually with Germany's life-and-death struggle. And fanaticism takes over ("without the slightest regard . . .") as that action claims absolute priority over the military struggle covering it ("All of the instruments . . ."), which it ostensibly subserves but transparently deserves (again: "without the slightest regard . . . All of the instruments . . .").

With this change in Hitler's ascendant style went one in his state as devices of arbitrary rule cut sharply across previously normalized channels of authority.⁶⁷ Here too his Euthanasia program, based on a personal order rather than a law, was a symbolic foreshadowing.⁶⁸ His line of personal command was by and large the racial-ideological as distinct from the power-political one. In practice, as formerly in theory, he linked the two without ever merging them. When his controlling anti-Semitic investment in Barbarossa emerged in the guise of anti-Bolshevism in his military councils of March 1941, it emerged outside the purview of the military. "The tasks are too demanding to be laid upon the army" was Hitler's first mention to the army of the SS's "special tasks" ahead.⁶⁹ And when the chief of the army nonetheless proposed a military administration of the areas to be conquered, he came in for a tongue-lashing from Hitler to the effect that "the army understands nothing about politics."⁷⁰ The generals accommodated themselves to those rear-line operations; some justified them in Hitlerite diction to the troops; a few even cooperated with the SS in rounding up partisans and Jews together for execution.⁷¹ But Hitler never treated his racial enterprise as the generals' business. To Heydrich and Himmler he had spoken the language of racial struggle and contamination and annihilation from the first; with generals and, as a rule, ministers, functionaries, and foreign statesmen as well he was the calculating, if increasingly miscalculating, *Realpolitiker* to the last. Only in rare instances did he hold forth both ways in the same company and then ordinarily by distinct turns.⁷² His doctrinal integration

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of his two approaches to Moscow had not survived his long discretion about both. As he remarked in a military conference of 1943, apropos of a confrontation over occupation policy in the Ukraine between Eastern Minister Alfred Rosenberg and Reich Commissioner Erich Koch, ideologue and *Machtpolitiker* respectively: "Ideological issues and ordinary practical issues are not so easy to reduce to a common denominator."⁷³ Here his slightly ironic phrasing already gave the edge to power politics for the generals' benefit. Ever so much more so did his account of Koch besting Rosenberg that followed and that exposed in full the fiction of Jewish parasitism and the counterproductivity of the Final Solution: "He [Koch] said: Here I lose 500,000 Jews," Hitler related. "I must remove them because the Jews are the insurrectionary element. But the fact is that in his area the Jews were the only craftsmen."⁷⁴ Hitler could shelve his doctrines just as well while dining with political personnel, as he did on 24 September 1941 to remark that "Stalin is one of the greatest people alive in that he succeeded in forging a state out of this Slavic rabbit breed—only by the most brutal coercion, to be sure. He was obliged to use the Jews to do it, since the thin Europeanized layer of Russiandom proper that had run the state before was wiped out and not about to be replaced."⁷⁵ That was time off from Bolshevism as rule by Jewry decomposing the body politic.

The ascendancy of Hitler's racial politics over his power politics once Barbarossa was under way was reflected in the rise of the SS over the other agencies of government, the rest of the Party, and the army.⁷⁶ Before 1941 German power, ultimately German military striking power, was the *raison d'être* of the Nazi state, the direction of its dynamism, the rationale of Hitler's ill-rationalized apparatus of rule. To heighten that power was a Darwinist enterprise in which ever new bureaus, procedures, and personnel competed with the old under his supreme control⁷⁷—below the level of the armed forces themselves until Barbarossa. Symbolically, he justified Euthanasia as a war economy at the prewar planning session for it.⁷⁸ In the face of the SS his other instruments of rule, multifarious and tangled, amounted to a regular governmental establishment. The SS, which embodied,

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warmongering, its negative effect on most Germans was blurred or canceled over the years. At length Germany's Jews were lumped together with foreigners in Germany's way. The official euphemisms—"transportation," "special handling," "final solution"—veiled Hitler's Jewish operation only in the sense that they shrouded its starkness.²¹ It tried a few private consciences, but no more aroused German opposition to Hitler than did the devastations and depredations inflicted on Poland and Russia.²² Such organized opposition as did arise in Hitlerized Germany turned on expectations of a German defeat.

The anti-Semitic agitator groomed himself as a drastic latter-day Ludendorff in the mid-1920s by way of gaining the dictatorial power he needed for his traumatic purpose of poisoning Germany's poisoner with Germany succumbing. But the terms of his leadership were a tacit trade-off whereby he would conduct his own traumatic business along with Germany's. He entered into the role of Ludendorff losing World War I the more passionately since it took him back to his own losing struggle of 1914-1918 for mother Germany. His acting for Germany was the central fact of the concurrent German reexperience of 1914-1918. That is, the German nation merely underwent that reexperience, whereas an individual engaged in traumatic reliving will control and even force events. Indeed, to control and thereby de-traumatize a traumatic experience is the apparent aim of reliving it. But Hitler controlled events for Germany. For this he was invested by Germans en masse as Ludendorff was not. They deputized him to drive home their 1918 defeat—and then read the signs of a renewal of World War I with submissive foreboding, holding fate to blame.²³ They exalted him personally above both his policy lines like heaven over hell. His atrocities in the ideological line were ascribed to evil henchmen,²⁴ and when he attacked Russia "a wave of compassion and sympathy welled up" for him as the victim of alleged treachery by the Bolshevik ally.²⁵ This unreality principle held even high above the popular consciousness. Only two out of seven Reichswehr chiefs' records or recollections of his briefing session of 28 February 1934 mention his representations on living space,²⁶ and his grim harangue of 30

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Hitler Orders the Holocaust

Jews were not an enemy of the German nation alone but of all mankind, and their elimination was not only a national but a universal task.

If we pursue this reasoning a bit further we may say that the elimination of the German Jews was in the interest of Germany, since they undermined Germany's capacity to struggle for living space. Consequently, their transfer into countries that were Germany's actual or potential opponents in the struggle for living space meant a weakening of these countries and was thus an advantage to Germany. But Hitler did not say so explicitly. He wished other countries to eliminate their Jews as well. This is the basic contradiction of Hitler's anti-Semitism. As a German he wanted the elimination of the German Jews before all others. But as far as the Jews were concerned, he felt that he could not afford to be a German alone. The Jewish question was so important to him that he sought the elimination of all Jews. In July 1941 he declared to a foreign statesman that he would confront each state with the demand to eliminate its Jews.¹⁰ In October of the same decisive year he said that he was doing humanity a service by exterminating this pest.¹¹

Rudolph Binion has convincingly demonstrated that Hitler did not succeed in solving this contradiction.¹² Thus in principle and from the outset his racial policy was less clear than his foreign policy. As for the war of conquest, he was to pursue the interests of Germany exclusively; hence his task was easy. As for the Jews, he had to pursue the interests of both Germany and humanity at once; hence this task was difficult. At times he set his priorities, at times he did not, and this confusion marked his acts.

Immediately after he came to power his task was easy. He had to remove the German Jews from political standing and if possible from Germany. His policy pursued these goals. By 1938 approximately 150,000 Jews or almost one third of the country's total Jewish population had left Germany. But with

tions were interrupted again, and Hitler told Frank on March 16 that an event was approaching that would mark a great change (he was referring, of course, to the beginning of the Russian campaign), and that the General Government would be the first region to be made free of Jews (*judenfrei*).⁴⁰

Three days before, Himmler had been given special responsibilities in the Russian campaign for which the *Einsatzgruppen* were established.⁴¹ As will be seen, there is still controversy over what their orders were and when those orders were given. But it can safely be stated that one of their objectives was to kill Russian Jews. This again was inconsistent. Whereas Hitler had formerly depicted the Jews as a disintegrating factor in Russia, he now presented them as the backbone of Russian resistance, which had to be broken in order to defeat Russia. It would have been more consistent of him to let them escape so that they could continue their work of disintegration. Moreover, it was to be expected that the killings would not remain secret and thus would stiffen Russian resistance, as indeed they did.

The beginning of the Russian campaign marked a turning point in Germany's Jewish policy. Obviously a prior order had been given to kill Russian Jews. But the decisions concerning the Jews in the rest of Europe remain obscure.

On May 20, 1941, Heydrich's office sent out a strange circular letter according to which the emigration of Jews from France and Belgium was to be halted.⁴² That was sensational enough, since emigration had always been promoted before then. But the reasons given in this strange letter were even stranger. It was said that according to information from Göring (*gemäß einer Mitteilung des Reichsmarschalls*), the emigration of Jews from Germany was to be increased; emigration from France and Belgium was, therefore, to be prevented because it diminished the chances for German Jews to emigrate. It may be noted incidentally that the emigration of German Jews was not forbidden until October 1, 1941.⁴³ But

May 1941

then the letter from Heydrich's office gave a second, ominous reason for halting Jewish emigration from France and Belgium. It continued, "and in view of the undoubtedly imminent final solution of the Jewish question" (*und im Hinblick auf die zweifellos kommende Endlösung der Judenfrage*).

This is puzzling indeed. If that so-called final solution meant killing as many Jews as possible, then it was highly inconsistent to increase Jewish emigration from Germany. But perhaps the fact that Göring was mentioned as having referred to increased emigration offers a clue to an interpretation of the letter. We may tentatively hypothesize that both Göring and Heydrich had heard of Hitler's desire to proceed to the final solution now, and that Heydrich wanted to fulfill that desire while Göring wanted to obstruct it. Shortly before, Göring had been quoted as saying, "It is more important for us to win the war than to implement racial policy."⁴⁴ Certainly the competing offices of the Third Reich were also struggling against each other over the Jewish question and the priorities to be set. And another hypothesis may be derived from this letter, namely, that Hitler had not issued a formal order but had, in May 1941, expressed the desire to proceed to the final solution in the foreseeable future.

According to Frank, Hitler declared outright on June 19, three days before the Russian campaign began, that the Jews would be removed (*entfernt*) from the General Government in the foreseeable future and that the General Government should become a transit camp only (*nur noch gewissermassen Durchgangslager*).⁴⁵ This statement can be interpreted as a cynical metaphor for transit to death, and indeed the killing centers were sometimes called transit camps.⁴⁶ It can also be taken literally. On July 21 Hitler dropped a hint that the Jews could be sent to Siberia.⁴⁷ It cannot be ruled out that he thought of a defeated Soviet Union, east of the prospective German line from Arkhangelsk to Astrakhan, as yet another and final dumping ground for the Jews, where Stalin would

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have to accept them. It must not be forgotten that in July he expected the war in the east to be over within a few months; he would by then be far from having solved the Jewish question by mass killings, if they could be undertaken in wartime only.

In any case he was fully engaged in extermination by July 1941, but the sequence of orders remains obscure. Alfred Streim has argued recently in a detailed study that the *Einsatzgruppen* commanders were ordered by Heydrich in Berlin on June 17 to execute all Communist commissars and Jewish party and state officials and to provoke anti-Jewish pogroms, that this order was repeated by Heydrich on July 2, and that an order by Hitler, a *Führerbefehl*, to kill all Russian Jews including women and children was not given until some time between the end of July and the end of August 1941.⁴⁸ This corresponds largely, but not entirely, to the actual sequence of events.

On July 20 and 21, 1941, Himmler was in Lublin and may have instructed Odilo Globocnik, the higher SS and police leader there, to prepare for the extermination of the Polish Jews.⁴⁹ The extermination of Polish Jews began, however, at Chelmno in the annexed western Polish territories on December 8, whereas Globocnik's Operation Reinhard did not begin until February or March 1942. On July 22 Frank discussed preparations for the removal of the Jews from the General Government beginning with the Warsaw Ghetto.⁵⁰ But this evacuation, to Treblinka, did not actually begin until exactly a year later, on July 22, 1942.⁵¹

On July 31, 1941, Heydrich went to see Göring and had him sign an authorization fully prepared in advance to make all the necessary preparations for a total solution of the Jewish question in the area of Europe under German control.⁵² Göring's signature probably enabled Heydrich to initiate the deportation of the German Jews. On August 18 Hitler promised Goebbels that the Jews of Berlin would be deported to the

* H + G are enemies. This is H's triumph over G.

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east immediately after the end of the eastern campaign.⁵³ Even so, the deportations began from Germany outside Berlin on October 15 and from Berlin on October 18. The first convoys went to Łódź, Minsk, and Riga. The first German Jews were shot near Kovno on November 25.

Both Rudolf Höss, the commander of Auschwitz, and Eichmann testified after the war that they were told by Himmler in the summer of 1941 that Hitler had ordered the final solution of the Jewish question. Höss was not pressed to be more specific. Eichmann specified that it had been about two or three months after the war against the Soviet Union had begun and that Hitler had ordered the physical liquidation of the Jews without, however, specifying which Jews were to be liquidated first.⁵⁴

Thereafter the operation was no longer kept entirely secret. On November 16, 1941, Goebbels wrote in a lead article in his weekly newspaper *Das Reich* that Hitler's prophecy on January 30, 1939, of the destruction of the Jewish race in Europe was now coming true.⁵⁵ Two days later Rosenberg confidentially told a press conference of the biological extermination of European Jewry as a whole.⁵⁶ On December 14 Hitler agreed with Rosenberg that it was not appropriate to speak of extermination in public.⁵⁷

On November 29 Heydrich sent out invitations to the Wannsee Conference scheduled to take place on December 9.⁵⁸ It was postponed later to January 20, 1942. The invitations were accompanied by copies of Göring's authorization of July 31, 1941. The importance of the Wannsee Conference should not be overrated. No decisions were made at the conference; its purpose was the briefing of officials and coordination of government agencies. One of its objectives may have been the inclusion of West European Jews in the final solution. On March 27 the first convoy of French Jews left Drancy, France, for Auschwitz, where mass killings had begun in February 1942.

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In four public speeches during 1942 Hitler reminded his listeners of his so-called prophecy of destruction of the Jews of Europe. Unlike Goebbels, who always dated it correctly from January 30, 1939, Hitler invariably misdated it to September 1 of that year. On that day, when the war against Poland began, he had also spoken in the Reichstag but he had not mentioned the Jewish question at all. There can be no doubt that the misdating, which was repeated in the printed versions of the speeches, was deliberate. Evidently he wanted the extermination of the Jews to be seen in connection with the beginning of the war.

We need not enter into the later stages of the Holocaust in order to answer our questions. Apparently not just one order was given to initiate it. And apparently its beginnings involved considerable inconsistency, improvisation, and confusion.

This has led some of the so-called functionalist historians to infer that the whole operation may not have been ordered or premeditated at all. In order to avoid misunderstandings it should be stressed that Martin Broszat, who has developed this thesis most explicitly, does not deny Hitler's responsibility for or approval of the killings. Broszat's thesis is only that they were proposed and initiated by others as well, that they were not planned long in advance and initiated by a single secret order.

There is some evidence for such an interpretation. On July 16, 1941, a relatively early date, officials close to the *Reichsstatthalter* in Posen, in the annexed Polish territories, asked Eichmann to consider seriously whether instead of letting the Jews starve, it would not be more human to dispose of those who could not work by a rapidly effective means.³⁹ Is it not logical to infer—that is the functionalists' question—that the final solution evolved gradually out of such proposals and the resulting individual killing operations?

My first answer is that there is no evidence that there were many such proposals or individual killing actions, and cer-

* The point of the Holocaust (as seen by the O.G.) is that the immune act itself will dispirit humanity and turn them into more and more superficial & extensive developments

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out, is totally unrealistic. It is as if we had forgotten everything we know about decision making. Never has an act of such magnitude as the Holocaust been decided upon in one conference and by one order alone. If we take for comparison's sake Hitler's decision to attack the Soviet Union, we can easily trace the process over many months or even years.

After decades of pondering the project and of interior and exterior preparations, Hitler informed his generals on July 31, 1940, of his resolve (*Entschluss*) to attack in the spring of 1941. Then military preparations began. A first operational draft of the general staff was ready on August 5, 1940. On November 12 instructions were given to continue all preparations that had been ordered orally. On December 18 the directive for Operation Barbarossa was issued. On May 1, 1941, the date for launching the offensive was set for June 22. The final order to attack was given by Hitler on June 17.

The fact that we do not have comparable documentary evidence for the preparation of the Holocaust must not lead us to suppose that this process was shorter. But it may well have been different. Although an unprovoked war of conquest was unusual, Hitler could feel that it was justified by historical experience and assume that a suitable pretext could be found when the time came. Moreover, once he had succeeded in convincing his generals of the necessity and the feasibility of the war, the campaign was, in its military aspect, a conventional operation that could be prepared and conducted with the aid of the traditional instrument of the general staff. After all, wars had been waged since time immemorial.

The mass slaughter of unarmed men, women, and children, however, was quite a different matter. Neither a convincing justification nor a pretext could be found easily. There were no preexisting organizational or technical instruments to fall back on. As Christopher Browning noted, the Nazis were venturing into uncharted territory and attempting the un-

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precedented; they had no maps to follow.⁶⁴ Martin Broszat pointed out that the extremely illegal character of the killings sufficed to preclude a written order by the head of state.⁶⁵

But these were not the only difficulties. After Hitler had encountered the protest, particularly by the churches but also from within the party, against the killing of the insane he had to expect a similar protest; certainly he could not assume that almost none would arise. Still more important, he could not assume that all his supporters would follow him along the road to the Holocaust. A striking example of what he could expect came from Gauleiter Wilhelm Kube. An old hand at Jew baiting, Kube was confronted with the bloody reality at his post as commissar general in Minsk; he was appalled at such actions and protested against them.⁶⁶ Hitler knew his men well enough to fear such reactions.

The next difficulty was in logistics. In this area as well, the lack of documentary evidence limits our understanding. Nevertheless, in the case of the Nisko operation of October 1939, when Eichmann dispatched two transports of 912 and 672 Jews from Vienna, we can follow in exceptional detail the extent of difficulties involved.⁶⁷ Through this case it may be easier to recognize the problems that could arise in transporting millions to places where they could be killed. The notion that even Hitler, wielding such immense power as he did, could restrict himself to issuing just one order to this effect is incomprehensible.

Another difficulty was of a technical nature. There certainly was experience to be derived from the killing of the insane in gas chambers. It requires further study to test the hypothesis of some scholars that this program was perhaps devised as a preparatory stage to the final solution. They argue that this action was stopped in August 1941 not only, as is usually believed, because of the public protest but also because the personnel and the equipment involved were to be used for the final solution. However this may have been, it can easily be

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seen from the improvisation of killing methods after June 1941 that the technical question was far from having been solved by then.

The enormous difficulties facing the implementation of the final solution should suffice to explain the lack of coherence in its execution. There is no need to draw the conclusion that it was the spontaneous result of situations that had developed. Could it not have been in Hitler's interest or been his intention to create the situational confusion in order to overcome the difficulties involved? Whether this was the case or not, the difficulties suggest a departure from our conventional notions of how decisions are made and orders issued.

In this respect we must now include in our consideration what we said earlier about the ambiguity of Hitler's anti-Semitism. That was the principal and most fundamental difficulty. His desire to exterminate the Jews was in conflict with his desire to win the war. He was just as unable to set his priorities when preparing the Holocaust as he had been when he had formulated his goals in the 1920s. As we have seen, Göring seems to have recognized the problem when he said that it was more important to win the war than to implement racial policy. Hitler was unable to understand this view and still tried to demonstrate that the Holocaust did not compromise the chances of victory. This inability also and most basically contributes to explaining the lack of coherence in his policy.

There is further evidence of this in the later course of events. In 1942 Hitler's task became easier as the course of the war began to set his priorities for him. On November 8 he said in a public speech in Munich:

You will recall the session of the Reichstag during which I declared: If Jewry should imagine that it could bring about an international world war to exterminate the European races, the result will not be the extermination of the European races, but the extermination of Jewry in Europe. People always laughed about me as a prophet. Of

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those who laughed then, countless numbers no longer laugh today, and those who still laugh now will perhaps no longer laugh a short time from now. This realization will spread beyond Europe throughout the entire world. International Jewry will be recognized in its full demonic peril; we National Socialists will see to that.⁶⁸

It should first be noted that Hitler used the formulation "international world war" as he had earlier, on September 30 of that year. This pleonasm was, of course, ridiculous unless Hitler wanted to differentiate between a national world war for living space and an international world war against the Jews. This may indeed have been his intention.

Furthermore, we must remember that in the course of that autumn of 1942 the second assault against the Soviet Union had failed, like the first, and the American invasion of North Africa had just begun. Yet according to Hitler's earlier plans, Russia was to have been vanquished by 1941, before the United States was ready for war. Thus there were definite reasons for Hitler to wonder if the war perhaps could not be won. Hitler would, of course, not admit this in public. But he may have felt that if he could not acquire new living space for Germany, he might at least achieve something for humanity. As the fortunes of war turned against Germany, Hitler became more and more convinced that the destruction of the Jews was his gift to the world. This became totally clear toward the end of the war. In a dictated memoir on February 13, 1945, Hitler said, "I have lanced the Jewish abscess, like the others. For this, the future will be eternally grateful to us." And again in his last words recorded on April 2 in his bunker in Berlin, "The world will be eternally grateful to National Socialism that I have eradicated the Jews in Germany and Central Europe."⁶⁹

For the last time we return to the question how and when the decision was made. There can no longer be a reasonable doubt that it was made by Hitler. But how are we to envision

* See p 61 the reason he did not see it as a conflict is that the demonic peril was upon them - and could hardly await for the Jews to weaken other nations,

Dec 11, 1941

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On Thursday, December 11, 1941, at 2:18 P.M. Ribbentrop, the German foreign minister, received the American chargé d'affaires (the ambassador had been recalled after the anti-Jewish pogrom of November 1938) in his Berlin office on the Wilhelmstrasse and, standing, read a statement to him that concluded with the declaration that Germany regarded itself "as being at war with the United States of America as of today." The meeting lasted three minutes.¹ At 3:00 P.M. the German Reichstag met to hear a speech by Hitler in which he announced the declaration of war.² While he was speaking, the German chargé d'affaires in Washington at 9:30 A.M. local time delivered a note to the State Department worded identically with the statement read by Ribbentrop.³ Thus the two countries were at war with each other for the second time in their history. Whereas it was the United States that had declared war in 1917, in 1941 the declaration of war was made by Germany.

(More than forty years later it is still unclear what prompted the German government to take this step. Indeed it does not

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seem easy to say why, when the German campaign against the Soviet Union was stuck in the snow in front of Moscow and when Britain was still undefeated, Germany should take on as an additional enemy the very power to whom it had succumbed in World War I. It has become customary, therefore, to assume that there is no convincing explanation for this decision, that it did not serve the interests of the German ruling circles, that it followed the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor as a more or less impulsive expression of desperation or megalomania, or even that it is a sign that Hitler almost wanted to bring about his own downfall. Whatever reasons are given for it, and though most of the relevant documents have been accessible for some time, the decision remains puzzling.

Since the decision was made by Hitler, incidentally without any consultation with his military advisers, we must once more begin with him, with his conduct of foreign policy and with his assessment of the situation in 1941. In particular the decision-making process must be retraced as precisely as possible, and so the inquiry will become largely a piece of diplomatic history.

Hitler's foreign policy followed a plan already laid down in the 1920s.⁴ Since I have dealt with it in some detail in Chapter 2, I shall restrict myself to the points relevant to our present question. It will be remembered that Hitler's main aim in foreign policy was a war of conquest against the Soviet Union. When Hitler reflected on how this war was to be won, his thoughts were from the beginning not really directed toward the actual opponent, for the Soviet Union was supposed to collapse swiftly under a German attack. Rather, his thoughts were directed toward establishing a diplomatic constellation in which Germany could not be prevented by other powers from achieving success. In Hitler's eyes their intervention was the real problem, not Russian resistance.

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conquest of living space as well as to discourage Britain once and for all. Now the United States came into the picture for the first time along with, once again, Japan.

Britain's hope, Hitler argued to his generals on July 31, 1940, lies with Russia and America. If and when the Russian hope vanishes, the American hope will vanish as well, because the fall of Russia will upgrade Japan in East Asia on a tremendous scale. This argument was partially meant by Hitler to convince his generals of the necessity and the feasibility of the Russian campaign. But in part it was also his real reasoning. The first and overriding purpose of the Russian campaign was conquest, but the second and subordinate purpose was to end the war with Britain. With the expected defeat of Russia, Britain's last hope would be obliterated. America would not intervene if Japan were pursuing an active policy in East Asia as a result of the German victory over the Soviet Union. Even if Britain still held out it would not matter, for with the conquest of Russia Germany would acquire an economic and strategic base from which it could carry on the war indefinitely.

During the preparations for the eastern campaign Hitler's reasoning followed this line quite consistently. He was not much concerned about Russia, which he still thought would collapse quickly. What he did worry about was the other powers, which could hinder Germany or assist the Soviet Union. This danger increased the longer the campaign lasted. If against his expectations the conquest of Russia could not be completed in the course of 1941, British and American operations of various kinds were to be feared. In fact the United States was already giving increasing support to the British war effort. Both powers, however, could be engaged by Japan in East Asia and thus be distracted from Europe and deterred from intervening there.

This was, for Hitler, the purpose of the Tripartite Pact concluded by Germany, Italy, and Japan on September 27, 1940.

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which stated that the three powers would support each other with any and all means should one of them be attacked by the United States.⁵ It thus guaranteed that if America entered the war, it would have to fight on two fronts, in the Atlantic as well as in the Pacific; thus Germany would not have to fear undivided American intervention as in World War I. Hitler's interest in the Tripartite Pact clearly was to prevent the United States from entering the war on the side of Britain.

This deterrence, however, was not sufficient for Hitler. In order to gain additional security he urged Japan to attack British positions in East Asia. During a high-level discussion of the plans of attack against the Soviet Union, he said on February 15, 1941, "It must be Germany's aim to make Japan act as soon as possible in the Far East. It must gain possession of Singapore and all the raw material areas it needs for the continuation of the war, especially if America should intervene."⁶ In a directive on cooperation with Japan dated March 5 he repeated these thoughts, adding that "strong English forces will be tied down and the focus of American interest will be diverted to the Pacific."⁷

Japan did not follow Hitler's suggestion. Instead, in the spring of 1941 Japan opened negotiations with the United States, which had opposed Japanese penetration into China and Indochina with various measures.⁸ If these talks were to lead to an agreement, a Japanese attack on Singapore would become even less likely and America would again be completely free to act in Europe, especially if Japan denounced the Tripartite Pact or obviously failed to abide by it. In view of this threat, Hitler enlarged on his guarantee to Japan under the Tripartite Pact. When the Japanese foreign minister Matsuo paid a visit to Berlin and Rome in March and April 1941, Hitler promised him that Germany would join Japan immediately and unconditionally in case of a Japanese conflict with either America or Russia.⁹ Whereas under the Tripartite Pact Germany was obliged to assist Japan only in the case of

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an American attack, Hitler had now included by implication the case of a Japanese attack as well and had added Russia to the list. But Matsuoka did not pay much attention and may not even have fully understood what Hitler was saying.

During these talks the Germans not only repeated insistently that the Japanese should attack Singapore. They also made more or less veiled hints that a German-Soviet war was imminent. Once more, however, Matsuoka did not grasp what he was told. On his way back to Japan he concluded a neutrality pact with the Soviet Union in Moscow and told the American ambassador there that the Germans apparently had wanted their hints to be transmitted to Stalin to induce him to increase Russian exports.¹⁰

It is true that neither Hitler nor Ribbentrop had been outspoken with Matsuoka on this point, and this was again consistent with their policy. At first sight it must certainly have seemed tempting to persuade Japan to participate in the upcoming eastern war. If the Soviet Union were attacked from the west and the east simultaneously, its chances of survival would be even lower than they were already considered to be. But in fact this line of consideration was only of secondary importance to Hitler, just as it had always been. The military aspect of the Russian campaign was not his concern. His primary goal was still to persuade Japan to attack Britain in East Asia and thus indirectly to deter America from intervention in Europe. It was only because Japan appeared to be hesitating that Hitler extended his promises of support in order to persuade Japan to enter the war, whether against Britain, as he would have preferred, or against Russia or even America, which still seemed least desirable.

Overall this order of preference did not change during the following weeks. The Japanese ambassador in Berlin, Oshima, was repeatedly given hints that the war was approaching, and he reported on April 16 and again in the first days of June that he had gained the impression that Japanese participation in

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Germany's eastern war was perhaps desired after all. It seems that Ribbentrop was more keen on such participation than Hitler. But even he told Oshima clearly what the German position was on June 4: "It would, of course, be up to Japan to act as it saw fit, but Japan's cooperation in the fight against the Soviet Union would be welcomed *if the [Japanese] advance to the south should run into difficulty because of supplies and equipment [my italics]*."¹¹

It was precisely this position that Weizsäcker, the well-informed secretary of state in the Foreign Office, noted in his diary on June 8: "Now that [Oshima] has been told more clearly or it has become clearer to him that the Russian question is becoming acute, he appears to want to see to it that Japan will move on if not to Singapore then at least toward Vladivostok."¹² If not Singapore, then at least Vladivostok: That was still the order of preference, and provoking America's entry into the war was still Hitler's last choice. Japan was not to attack America and Germany was to avoid any sort of provocation. On the eve of the war, on June 21, Hitler made this clear to the navy once more. As Admiral Raeder noted, "Until the effects of 'Barbarossa' [the code word for the Russian campaign] can be seen, i.e., for several weeks, the führer wants every possible incident with the U.S.A. to be strictly avoided."¹³

The following day, June 22, 1941, several weeks later than originally planned because of the Balkan campaign, Germany invaded the Soviet Union. In Japan Matsuoka advocated Japan's immediate participation, but he could not gain sufficient support and resigned on July 16.¹⁴ In Germany Ribbentrop, worried additionally over the continuing Japanese-American negotiations, now pressed vigorously for Japan to enter the war against Russia. He spoke to Oshima on this, and on June 28 he sent the following directive to his ambassador in Tokyo: An advance to the South toward Singapore was and would remain of great importance. Since Japan was not yet

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prepared for it at the moment, however, it should advance against Soviet Russia without delay. "In this way it would also free its rear for the advance to the South." Then followed the old German reasoning: "It can be assumed that a rapid defeat of Soviet Russia, especially if Japan participates from the east, will be the best means of convincing the United States that it would be totally pointless to enter into war on the side of a then completely isolated England opposed by the most powerful combination in the world."¹⁵ This directive demonstrates once more that Japan's entry into the war was still desired primarily to deter the United States and only secondarily as military assistance against the Soviet Union, which Germany at that time believed itself able to defeat alone.

This position was confirmed when American forces occupied Iceland on July 7. Understandably the German navy was extremely concerned about this move, since they saw in it a serious hindrance to their own warfare in the Atlantic. Yet when Admiral Raeder asked Hitler two days later for a "political decision" on whether the occupation of Iceland should be considered America's entry into the war or an act of provocation to be ignored, he was told "that it was of utmost importance to [Hitler] to delay America's entry into the war for another one or two months, since on the one hand the entire air force was needed for the eastern campaign and on the other a success of the eastern campaign would have a tremendous effect on the overall situation and probably also on the attitude of the United States." Hitler wanted, therefore, "any incident to be avoided as before."¹⁶

Meanwhile Japan was still hesitating and negotiating in Washington. Ribbentrop now suspected Japan of attempting on its side exactly what Germany wanted to achieve for itself. On July 10 he anxiously asked his ambassador in Tokyo whether there might be an interest in Japan in reaching an agreement with America so that America would then get embroiled in the European war and Japan, without coming

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into open conflict with America, would have a free hand in East Asia to settle the Chinese affair and expand further to the south. All the more urgently he requested Ambassador Ott "to persuade Japan to enter the war against Russia as quickly as possible."¹⁷

Recognizing the danger in this situation, Hitler stepped in once again and received Oshima in his headquarters on July 14. "If we can keep the United States out of the war at all," he said, "we will only be able to do so by destroying Russia and only if Japan and Germany act simultaneously and unequivocally."¹⁸ Fear of American intervention and the desire to keep America out of the war were still the cornerstones of Germany's Japanese policy. They remained so even when America sided more and more openly with Britain and also supported the Soviet Union.

In August President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill met and proclaimed the Atlantic Charter, which referred to "the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny"—strong words indeed from a neutral country. In September Roosevelt ordered the policy of "shoot on sight" against Axis ships in the Atlantic and explained the policy in an unusually solemn radio broadcast. Such a deliberate provocation would have justified a German declaration of war or at least the announcement of identical retaliatory measures.

Yet even then Hitler demanded restraint. After Raeder had explained the new situation in the Atlantic to him on September 17, he recorded the result of the conversation as follows: "On the basis of a thorough examination of the overall situation (end September great decision in the Russian campaign), the führer has asked to see to it that there will be no incidents in the merchant war until about the middle of [October]." Contrary orders that had already been prepared for German submarines were withdrawn.¹⁹

At the same time the German leaders were growing more and more suspicious of Japan, which was still negotiating

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with America. Hitler no longer wanted to insist on Japan's entry into the war "so as not to create the impression that we need the Japanese."²⁰ On September 13 Ribbentrop even notified the Japanese government that Roosevelt's aggressive policy was bound to lead to a state of war between Germany and Italy on the one side and America on the other, and that by the terms of the Tripartite Pact this would necessitate Japan's immediate entry into the war against America. He insisted that Japan transmit a declaration to this effect to Washington.²¹ Japan was expected at least to help prevent an American entry into the war. It was also warned that its negotiations might soon become pointless because it would have to fulfill its pledge of support according to the Tripartite Pact.

The month of October passed without visible change in the Japanese attitude. Ambassador Ott reported "a certain helplessness as to the course to be pursued" and the increasing feeling that a conflict with the United States was unavoidable.²² On October 29 he reported in a cable that in the new cabinet under Tōjō, which had come into office on October 18, the forces working toward an agreement with America were now weak.²³ But on October 31, after a meeting with the new foreign minister, Tōgō, he could only report that a decision had not yet been reached about the warning to the United States requested by Germany on September 13.²⁴ The Germans took no further initiative.

Then at last signs came from Japan. On November 5 Ambassador Ott reported "with reservation" a "cautious approach on the part of the [Japanese] navy concerning a German assurance not to conclude a separate peace or armistice in case of a Japanese-American war."²⁵ On November 18 he reported that the head of the section for foreign armies of the Japanese general staff, General Okamoto, had "apparently on higher instruction" mentioned the following point to the German military attaché with the request that it be passed on. Okamoto said:

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The sending of Kurusu [who had been sent additionally to the negotiations in Washington early in November] represents a last attempt to clear up Japanese-American relations. The Japanese general staff does not expect a peaceful solution to be possible. The Japanese self-help then necessary is likely to be followed by the entry of the United States into war. . . . The Japanese general staff thinks that mutual assistance can best be assured by a commitment of both states, Germany and Japan, to conclude an armistice or peace not separately but only together.²⁶

This was a strange request by the Japanese. Apparently the Japanese general staff was not aware that Hitler had long ago given a much more extended pledge to join Japan in a war with the United States immediately and unconditionally. Instead of referring to this assurance now, Japan was asking only that the two states not end their wars separately. Since Germany was not at war with America, this could only apply to Britain and Russia, with which Japan was not at war. Japan obviously wanted a protective distraction in Europe similar to that which Germany had been seeking for a long time in East Asia.

Ott's telegram reached Berlin on November 19. Without much delay Ribbentrop replied on the twenty-first that the ambassador himself or the military attaché should tell General Okamoto that they had reported to Berlin "and heard that there the idea of concluding an armistice or peace only jointly in case, for whatever reason, Japan or Germany were to become involved in a war with the United States was taken for granted and that Germany was perfectly willing to spell it out in an agreement."²⁷ That was a cautious answer to an exploratory question. Yet Ribbentrop had at once included the case of a German-American state of war as well and had suggested a formal agreement.

Ott answered quickly on November 23. He had at first had the military attaché carry out Ribbentrop's instructions, but had then received Okamoto at Okamoto's request and Oka-

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moto had brought thanks from Tōjō. Thus the highest level had been reached. Okamoto had said that "he was pleased to receive confirmation once more that Germany would not abandon Japan in case of a conflict with the United States." Then Ott went on reporting: "He [Okamoto] requested me to inform him whether it was my opinion that Germany would also consider itself to be at war with the United States if Japan were to open hostilities [*im Falle einer japanischen Kriegseröffnung*]." ²⁸

Now the Japanese had gone one step further. Obviously encouraged by Ribbentrop's positive reply, they now wanted to know if Germany was prepared to join Japan in a war against America. Okamoto spoke clearly of the Japanese opening hostilities, since he apparently was well aware that the opposite case of an American initiative was covered by the Tripartite Pact. But he did not say whether Japan on its side would join Germany in a war against America and he did not refer to Hitler's assurance given in April, which appeared to be unknown even to the Japanese government. He asked (that was the meaning behind his words) whether Germany would enter a war against America started by Japan even though it was not obliged by the pact to do so.

Thus the decisive question had been raised. Certainly Hitler must have been relieved that Japan was finally acting. But at the same time he was now confronted with the prospect of a war against America, which he had tried to avoid by every means available. In fact we know, although Ribbentrop could not have known, that Japan's supreme decision-making body, the Liaison Conference between the government and the armed forces, had decided on November 12 that Germany and Italy should be informed if war with America became inevitable and that the following agreement should be negotiated: "(a) The participation of Germany (Italy) in the war against the United States; (b) Neither of the two parties will make peace separately." In his exploratory approach Okamoto

had asked about these two points in reverse order. In the Japanese minutes an important note follows: "In case Germany demands that we participate in the war against the Soviet Union, we will respond that we do not intend to join the war for the time being. If this should lead to a situation whereby Germany will delay her entry into the war against the United States, it cannot be helped."²⁹

Ott's telegram containing Okamoto's decisive question arrived in Berlin on November 24 at 3:00 A.M. There is no indication that Ribbentrop ever replied to it. His next telegram in the publication of the German Foreign Office documents is dated December 6, by which time the agreement between Germany, Italy, and Japan had already been drafted. There are large gaps in the German records for these crucial days, probably because of the destruction shortly before the end of the war. The relevant Japanese records also seem to have been almost totally destroyed in 1945. Fortunately, the gaps can be filled to a certain extent by numerous diplomatic messages exchanged between Tokyo and the Japanese embassies in Europe that were intercepted and decoded by American and British intelligence services; these have recently been published in full in a collection called *The "Magic" Background of Pearl Harbor*.³⁰

Nevertheless, a detailed reconstruction of the decision-making process in Germany at this time is difficult. Furthermore, the decisive conversations between Hitler and Ribbentrop were not recorded in any manner, and we cannot look into Hitler's and Ribbentrop's tormented minds during these days when the Russian campaign ran into its most serious crisis. On the other hand, the result of their reflections is clear. The decisive question confronting Hitler was whether Germany should promise to join Japan in a war started by Japan against the United States. I think we can safely assume that he was immediately informed about Okamoto's question. Ribbentrop had probably transmitted Ott's telegram to

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transmitted to Ribbentrop by Oshima in the evening of December 1, the foreign minister told the ambassador that he had to consult Hitler but could not reach him until December 4 or 5.³³ This is not quite compatible with the assumption derived from Oshima's telegram that the decision had already been made by November 28. But since the Japanese were now demanding a formal agreement, Ribbentrop may have felt that he had to consult Hitler once more. We must also consider that the Germans had not been told how imminent the Pacific war was.

At first sight it seems unlikely that on such an important question the German foreign minister should not have been able to contact his führer for three or four days. Yet it is true that on December 2 Hitler flew to the south of the eastern front at Taganrog, that he planned to return to his headquarters near Rastenburg in East Prussia, but he was hindered by bad weather, had to spend the night in Poltava on the return flight, and so did not arrive at his headquarters until December 4.³⁴ There is even some evidence for Ribbentrop's improbable statement that he was not able to get in touch with Hitler at this time. Hitler's valet, Heinz Linge, who was also on the flight, related after the war that in Poltava Hitler "suffered excruciatingly at the thought of what might be happening at headquarters and in his chancellery while he was hundreds of kilometers away, cut off from the outside world, without communications, imprisoned in an old tumbledown and bug-ridden castle."³⁵ This seems the more likely, since during these days the crisis on the eastern front was accompanied by a serious crisis in the supreme command of the army.

Hitler took off from Poltava on December 4 and returned to his East Prussian headquarters in the course of the day. There Ribbentrop must have finally been able to reach him. Whereas it had originally been assumed that Ribbentrop spoke to him by telephone, it now seems clear, according to another intercepted Japanese telegram, that he went there in

* a scene! How he talks the Russian.
Every bug is a Russian bug!

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person.³⁶ This corroborates our former assumption that a final decision had not been reached on November 28 and was not made until the afternoon of December 4.

This is confirmed again by the German records. In the course of that evening, at 9:30 P.M., the German ambassador in Rome, Mackensen, was phoned from Berlin by order of Ribbentrop and forewarned that in the next few hours he would receive instructions by telephone that he would have to carry out during the night in the presence of Ciano, the Italian foreign minister, and if necessary the duce himself. The instructions reached Rome at 1:30 A.M. on December 5 and "were not coded." Having received the full text, Mackensen went at 2:20 A.M. to Ciano's residence and read him "the German text orally translated into Italian," since there had been no time to produce a written translation. Ciano immediately gave the Italian consent, which was communicated to Berlin at 2:45 A.M., so that by 4:00 A.M. the Japanese ambassador could be given the text approved by both Axis powers and send it on to Tokyo.³⁷

What had apparently been drawn up and agreed to in extreme haste during this night was the draft of a new tripartite agreement.³⁸ Its first article stated that if war should break out between any one of the partners and the United States, the other two would at once consider themselves at war with the United States as well. The second article stipulated that the three partners would in case of war not conclude an armistice or peace with either America or England except by complete mutual consent. According to the third article the agreement was to be kept strictly secret, but the obligation contained in Article 2 was to be published in a form to be agreed upon as soon as the war had begun.

Thus Hitler promised Japan to join immediately in a war against America regardless of how it came about. But he had made certain that Japan gave the same pledge as far as Germany was concerned. This had been added to the original

Japanese draft at Germany's request. Ciano immediately stressed this when he said that it appeared to him to be an agreeable emendation "in our favor."³⁹ In the same vein Weizsäcker noted on December 6, "I think that we cannot refuse [the Japanese request] but must demand reciprocity in point 2 [entry into war]. The negotiations were conducted in this sense. I expect us to reach a conclusion today."⁴⁰

The agreement was not signed. While details were still being thrashed out in telegrams exchanged between Tokyo and Berlin, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7. The attack became known in Berlin on the evening of that Sunday. It dramatically dispelled German doubts about whether Japan really would enter the war. If this had been the goal of the German promise, it was now achieved and Hitler was free again to join Japan or not. Moreover, since his aim had been to involve the United States in the Pacific and thus reduce the danger of American intervention in Europe, this involvement was now an established fact and Hitler might have wondered whether a German declaration of war was still necessary. At any rate, it did not follow "at once," as had been provided for in the now obsolete draft agreement. Instead the partners began immediately to negotiate a new agreement. On Monday, December 8 Ribbentrop gave Oshima a draft and sent it in the evening to Ott in Tokyo with the request to urge acceptance quickly enough for it to be signed in Berlin on Wednesday morning at the latest, because it was, he added, "possibly to be made public in a special form."⁴¹

This referred to the meeting of the Reichstag, which apparently had already been decided upon. Hitler came to Berlin on Tuesday morning to prepare for it.⁴² On the same day he ordered all restrictions on naval warfare to be abolished and the United States "to be now regarded as an enemy."⁴³ There can be no doubt that the German declaration of war had been decided upon and the haste of this decision is explained by the fear that the Americans would steal the show. (Roosevelt,

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incidentally, had no reason to ask the still reluctant Congress for a declaration of war; he was fully informed by the intercepted messages of what was going on between Berlin and Tokyo.)

These negotiations lasted longer than Ribbentrop wanted. The Japanese insisted on supplementing the agreement with some explanatory additions, which did not reach Berlin until Tuesday night. Ribbentrop gave his consent on Wednesday and once again requested a quick response so that the authorization for Oshima to sign the treaty would arrive at the latest by noon on Wednesday.⁴⁴ In the meantime everything had been prepared in Berlin for the ceremony and the German chargé d'affaires in Washington had already been instructed to deliver the declaration of war on Thursday.⁴⁵ Oshima finally received his authorization, whereupon the agreement was signed by Ribbentrop, by the Italian ambassador Alfieri, and by Oshima on Thursday, December 11, presumably just before the declaration of war was made. On the same afternoon Hitler announced the agreement at the end of his long speech to the Reichstag by reading it out word for word.

Unlike the first agreement, the second one did not contain an obligation to go to war, since this was now a foregone conclusion. The agreement stipulated only the obligation not to conclude an armistice or a peace treaty with the United States or England without complete mutual consent. It therefore came to be called unofficially the no-separate-peace treaty (*Nichtsonderfriedensvertrag*).⁴⁶

Let us now return to the question we raised at the outset: Why did Germany declare war on the United States on December 11, 1941? We have to state first that the answer remains tentative, but our assumptions now rest on firmer ground. Contrary to what is commonly believed, the decision to declare war was not prompted by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The decision had been preceded by short but

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determined negotiations between Germany and Japan, and it had largely been made in the course of those negotiations at a time when Hitler was not yet completely certain that Japan would really enter the war.

For a long time Hitler had wanted to avoid war with the United States. He had done so even after Roosevelt's "shoot on sight" order of September 1941, which could have served as a plausible pretext for a declaration of war. In the German note and in Hitler's speech of December 11 this "shoot on sight" order was certainly mentioned as one of the reasons for the declaration of war, but it can be ruled out as the real or only reason. In fact, in his speech Hitler did not deny that his decision was primarily connected with Japan's policy, which undoubtedly was the central factor in his decision making.

In order to keep America out of the war, he had constantly sought since the spring of 1941 that Japan would enter it, preferably against Britain or, failing that, against the Soviet Union. Only his concern that Japan might not undertake either course prompted him in April to promise Matsuoka that Germany would also join Japan in a war against America. Thus the simple explanation could be given that Hitler remained consistent and carried out in December what he had promised in April. To a large extent this explanation seems to be convincing, but it is not altogether sufficient. The situation in December was dramatically different from that in April. In the meantime it had become obvious that contrary to Hitler's expectations of the spring, the Soviet Union could not be defeated in 1941 and perhaps not in 1942 either. In view of this severe military crisis it could well be asked whether it was still in Germany's interest to follow Japan into its war against America.

Ribbentrop may have thought so. This would explain why he did not answer General Okamoto's question of November 23 until the Japanese returned to it urgently, and why he then

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wanted to discuss the matter once more with Hitler. It is not certain whether he could not get in touch with him for technical reasons. He may have preferred a personal conversation to a telephone call or radio contact, giving him greater freedom to explain his misgivings. There are indications in Weizsäcker's diary that Ribbentrop particularly wanted to avoid the obligation not to make peace separately, since it would exclude a separate peace with Britain.⁴⁷

However this may have been, Hitler decided probably on November 28 and definitely by December 4 to meet the Japanese request. But now the Germans were not satisfied with the exchange of simple promises with which the Japanese would have been content. The Germans demanded a formal agreement based on reciprocity. They apparently thought it possible that a German-American war could come sooner than one between Japan and America. When this war came on December 7, the agreement had not yet become effective, so once more a decision had to be made. Hitler could have avoided a declaration of war on formal grounds, particularly because the advantage he had been seeking, namely, the reduction of the danger of American intervention in Europe, was now won in his view. He could also have declined the Japanese request to enter the war against America in the same way that Japan had declined the German request to enter the war against Russia. He could even make his earlier request a condition of Germany's meeting the Japanese request.

Instead he decided once more for war. But he did not declare it immediately. He insisted on concluding what has been called a no-separate-peace treaty beforehand. He must have attached great importance to it, for he read and stressed the treaty prominently in his speech to the Reichstag. We may call this treaty the price to be paid by Japan for Germany's entering the war.

Viewed from this perspective and against the background

1941 (Japan)

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of his general considerations and the situation in December 1941, Hitler's decision becomes comprehensible. His failure to win a quick victory over Russia amounted to a failure of his concept of war in general. The war that he had envisioned as a series of lightning campaigns (*Blitzfeldzüge*) was now becoming a war of attrition just as the war of 1914-1918 had been. Then Russia had collapsed in the fourth year of the war and had had to accept the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, with the result that Germany had gained immense lands in the east. Even so, in Hitler's view Germany had lost the war in the end for internal and external reasons, the latter referring to the American intervention, and he had since concentrated on overcoming these factors. The internal reasons had been removed by his racial policy. The external reasons were, as we have seen, Hitler's main concern in 1941.

It is a reasonable assumption that Hitler foresaw in December 1941 a development of the Second World War similar to that of the First: Russia could be defeated and America would intervene. But Germany did not have to lose the war if Japan took part in it. Japan could prevent America from all-out intervention in Europe by diverting that part of the American and British forces which so very narrowly had determined the outcome in 1918. In order to guarantee this sequence of events, Japan had to do more than enter the war. It had to be kept from pulling out before victory had been won in Europe. It had to be kept from concluding an early peace as it had done with other opponents in 1895 and 1905, in each instance in the second year of the war.

The treaty of December 11 to which Hitler attached so much importance, just like the earlier draft agreement of December 5, was to serve that precise purpose. In return for entering the war, Germany received the promise that Japan would not leave it. From Hitler's point of view this was not an unreasonable idea and there is no need to assume irrational

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motives. The declaration of war against the United States was an adequate step toward winning a war that essentially was and remained a war of conquest against the Soviet Union, in spite of the failure of the campaign of 1941. That war was madness, yet there was method in it.

1940, (1941)

and, above all, how the one could emerge from the other are questions that can find their answers in a historical analysis.

Hitler always kept in mind what he had written in his book *Mein Kampf*: "The basic foundation for establishing authority is always popularity."³ He immediately qualified that sentence and saw "in power . . . in force" the other principal basis of all authority.⁴ Nevertheless, no saying of his has been handed down to posterity that even remotely resembles the words engraved on Napoleon's tomb: "May my ashes rest on the banks of the Seine near the people whom I loved so dearly." That Hitler loved the Germans is a dubious proposition; indeed he did not even want to be buried on the Spree, but in Linz on the Danube.⁵

Just as Alexander the Great was not a Greek, Napoleon not a Frenchman, and Stalin not a Russian, so Hitler came from the outside, at the least from outside the boundaries of the German national state created by Bismarck, and he spoke of the Germans in a distant manner, as if he didn't really belong to them. "Here too I am as cold as ice," he remarked during the war. "If the German people are not prepared to do battle for their self-preservation, then fine, let them perish!"⁶ Even in public speeches he made these comments, as on December 18, 1940, to a group of officer candidates: "This nation will fade away" if it fails to assert its claim to existence.⁷ Then "it should vanish," he declared to a foreign statesman on November 27, 1941.⁸ Moreover he would "not shed a tear for it."⁹ To be sure he wanted to make Germany great, greater than it had ever been in history. But he was less concerned with Germans as individuals—with their well-being and their fortunes—than with German blood, which he shed coldheartedly in order to expand the nation.

The Germans, by contrast, loved him rather than feared him. Even though we must verify the general truth of this statement and will indeed do so, this much is indisputable: Under Hitler the Germans never doubted, despaired, or

* His fury is that human nature is not as good, generous, loyal and self-sacrificing in its love for him, not enough certainly to match his self-love.

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drew attention to the beer hall explosion, inferring his status in the eyes of Providence by saying "in all modesty" he was irreplaceable. Hitler went on to say that the assassination attempt of 8 November "may be repeated."⁵² Was Krafft's warning of a further attempt behind those sentiments?

Following Hess's bizarre mission to Britain, Krafft was again arrested—on 12 June 1941—and questioned about his links with Hess. Other astrologers were also interrogated about what they might know of a Krafft-Hess relationship.⁵³ At this time Krafft was also in trouble with the Gestapo for making another foolish announcement about one of his predictions: Germany would shortly invade the Soviet Union—details of the invasion which began on 22 June 1941 had naturally been Germany's top secret.⁵⁴

This time Krafft spent a year in prison before once again being released without explanation⁵⁵—and without Hess there to protect him!

He was put to work drawing up horoscopes and working on fake Nostradamus predictions. Howe says that some of the papers he had seen after World War II allegedly written by Krafft at this time represent "such futile examples of short essays or background notes obviously written for psychological warfare purposes that one can only wonder at the stupidity of the people who used Krafft's services for this purpose."⁵⁶ The reason for his erratic work may lie in the fact that by 1943 Krafft was prophesying Germany's defeat at private meetings of astrologers. This was treason.⁵⁷ For a third time the Gestapo dragged him away.

Krafft was held in Oranienburg concentration camp awaiting a trial that never came. In 1944, suffering with typhus and little more than a skeleton, he was packed in a cattle truck for transfer to Buchenwald concentration camp for extermination. He died en route,⁵⁸ an end he had not predicted for himself and leaving the way clear for de Wohl to travel the postwar world lecture circuit explaining how he had matched wits with "Hitler's favorite astrologer." In fact, "Hitler's favorite astrologer" never met the Führer, nor worked directly for him.

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Astrology's Role in Bizarre Affair of Hitler's Deputy

Rudolf Hess believed deeply in astrology and other aspects of the occult,²⁵ yet his actions led to widespread suffering among astrologers. On 10 May 1941 (an important date in what follows) in a move that provided World War II with one of its greatest and still largely unexplained mysteries, Hess, carrying and wearing, by several accounts, a variety of occult symbols, including a Tibetan amulet,²⁶ flew alone to Britain and parachuted into a field near Glasgow. He was soon captured and asked to be taken to the Duke of Hamilton. He claimed he was on a mission to enlist British support for Germany in a common attack on Communist Russia. He believed the duke was a politically influential figure.²⁷

As soon as he heard what his deputy had done Hitler publicly disowned Hess. Britain, strangely enough, did not treat the capture of the deputy as a propaganda coup or in any other way take advantage of it.²⁸ It confined itself to a brief official statement that Hess had been captured. Orthodox historian Alan Bullock says the reason for the government's silence was embarrassment and the implication that secret negotiations for a compromise peace might be going on between Britain and Germany.²⁹ One German was more puzzled than embarrassed: On 16 May, Goebbels recorded in his diary his amazement that the British government "has apparently not hit on the obvious idea of simply issuing statements in Hess's name, without consulting him." This, Goebbels observed, would incense the German people against Hitler. "This is the only—but a dreadful—danger to us," Goebbels wrote. Had he been in charge of British propaganda, he would undoubtedly have made much more of the whole incident.³⁰

The above speculation is interesting but does not throw any light on one of the intriguing aspects of the mystery that concerns us: Was the date of the mission randomly selected, or had it been chosen on some astrological or other occult basis? The first indication that astrology or the occult may have been in some way implicated came when German police rounded up those

Wrote Rudolf Hess's diary

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astrologers not currently in jail or in concentration camps and questioned them about what they knew of Hess and the mission.³¹

As we have seen,³² Hitler's interest in and knowledge of astrology was highly questionable. It appears, however, he was tolerant of Hess's preoccupation with the subject (as indeed he was of Himmler's weakness for the occult³³), that is, apparently, until the flight of his deputy.

Rudolf Hess was born on 26 April 1894, which makes him, like Hitler, a Taurean. One account has Hess as Hitler's astrologer in secret constantly passing onto Hitler from his various astrology contacts what the stars foretold for Hitler and Germany. Until March 1941 he had consistently predicted good fortune; from then on the stars showed Hitler's meteoric career was approaching its climax.³⁴

In Wolf Hess's account of his father's flight, Hitler had discussed the possibility of putting out peace feelers to Britain with Reichsmarshall Hermann Goering, another deputy führer and rival of Hess.³⁵ It seems that Goering had said to Hitler shortly after the war began, "We must fly to Britain and I'll try to explain the situation," and Hitler, though doubtful, suggested that if he could, he should try it. Goering apparently passed this on to Hess and it lodged in his mind.³⁶

Most orthodox accounts say Hitler knew nothing of Hess's mission until a few hours after the latter's Messerschmitt had taken off on 10 May. Hess had left a note and this was delivered to the Führer by courier.

Wolf Hess contends that Hitler did know of his father's plan to fly solo to Britain beforehand and the two men spent time together trying to pinpoint the most auspicious date for it.³⁷

Most accounts of Hitler's reaction to the news is that it produced an outburst of fury in which he raged around his study denouncing Hess as a traitor and demanding to know who else was involved.³⁸ By the time he had finished he had declared Hess to be mentally unbalanced and stripped him of his offices.³⁹

On the morning after his capture Hess did meet the young Duke of Hamilton, then an RAF officer. According to official

the political foundations of the régime in popular support. Through the revived industrial activity which it stimulated by the rearmament programme, it helped to overcome the economic crisis in which the Republic had foundered. The revolutionary impulse in Nazism was diverted into challenging the existing order outside Germany's frontiers and the creation of a European New Order, in which the big jobs and the privileges would go to the *Herrenvolk*. Above all, such a foreign policy was the logical projection of that unappeased will to power, both in Hitler himself and in the Nazi Party, which was now eager to extend its mastery further.

In the 1920s Hitler wrote in *Mein Kampf*: 'What a use could be made of the Treaty of Versailles! . . . How each one of the points of that Treaty could be branded in the minds and hearts of the German people until sixty million men and women find their souls aflame with a feeling of rage and shame; and a torrent of fire bursts forth as from a furnace, and a will of steel is forged from it, with the common cry: "*Wir wollen wieder Waffen!*"—We will have arms again!'" There was little doubt that Hitler's first objective in foreign policy would be to annul the Treaty, and in January 1941 he himself said, with considerable justification: 'My programme was to abolish the Treaty of Versailles. It is nonsense for the rest of the world to pretend today that I did not reveal this programme until 1933, or 1935, or 1937. Instead of listening to the foolish chatter of émigrés, these gentlemen would have been wiser to read what I had written and rewritten thousands of times. No human being has declared or recorded what he wanted more often than I.'

In practice, now that reparations had been ended, this could only mean Germany's right to rearm on terms of full equality with other nations, and the recovery of at least part of the territories lost in

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of government, and, he showed comparison by his departmental general lines of the Party bosses, Ley, created a prize Gauleiters on a of their own local wed this to happen; increased his power in his own position, or did he rouse himself

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the favourite Nazi which Germany membership gave expression of the German and the humiliation in the sense of national strength

hancellor, 1933-9

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The Counterfeit Peace, 1933-7

1920s

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race and speech, and the State, which need not be co-
extensive with the first, or might—as in the case of
the old Hapsburg Monarchy and Czechoslovakia—in-
clude peoples of different races.

Even this does not exhaust the meaning of Hitler's
belief that Germany's 1914 frontiers were inade-
quate. In the Nazi Party programme, adopted as
early as 1920, is to be found the culmination of
Hitler's foreign policy in the demand for *Lebens-
raum*, living room for the future of the *Volk*. Hitler
advocated a continental policy of territorial expan-
sion eastwards, seeking *Lebensraum* for Germany in
Eastern Europe, in the rich plains of Poland, the
Ukraine, and Russia. Such a policy would mean the
resumption of the ancient struggle against the Slavs,
and its logical consequence was war with Russia.
Hitler faced and accepted this as early as the 1920s,
and when the German armies invaded the Soviet
Union in 1941 it was in execution of a policy whose
outlines are already to be found in *Mein Kampf*.

Hitler looked to the conquest of Eastern Europe
and Russia for the opportunity to build his New
Order, the empire of the *Herrenvolk* based upon the
slave labour of the inferior races. Such plans involved
the movement of populations, the deliberate de-
pression of whole races to a lower standard of life
and civilization, the denial of any chance of educa-
tion or medical facilities, even, in the case of the
Jews, systematic extermination.

In these schemes for redrawing the map of the
world and remodelling the distribution of power upon
biological principles the authentic flavour of Nazi
geopolitics is to be discovered. Hitler's over-inflamed
imagination set no bounds to the expansion of Nazi
power. As Papen remarked after the war: 'It was on
the limitless character of Nazi aims that we ran
aground.' In the early 1930s these appeared no more
than the fantasies with which Hitler beguiled the
early morning hours round the fire in the Berghof;

1940

March
1941

War-Lord, 1939-45

Straits had been increased, while Britain had been given the opportunity to secure bases in Greece from which to bomb Rumania and southern Italy.

The measures with which Hitler proposed to meet these difficulties were comprehensive. Spain must come into the war at once, seize Gibraltar and guarantee north-west Africa. Russia must be turned away from the Balkans, Turkey persuaded to stop any threats against Bulgaria, Yugoslavia induced to collaborate with the Axis against Greece, and Rumania pressed to accept German reinforcements. To these political tasks, Hitler added increased air attacks on the British Navy and its bases in the eastern Mediterranean, in which the German Air Force would assist the Italians. The German squadrons must, however, be sent back by 1 May at the latest, and land operations against Egypt would have to be abandoned for the time being. The principal military effort would go into a German attack by March 1941 to clear the British out of Thrace.

Mussolini's comment on reading Hitler's letter was brief: 'He has really smacked my fingers.' However, he accepted Hitler's proposals.

In the meantime Hitler was engaged in securing the political prerequisites for his intervention in Greece. A succession of Balkan rulers was imperiously summoned to Germany. On 5 December Hitler wrote again to Mussolini. Yugoslavia and Bulgaria were proving difficult—the latter under Russian pressure—but he had hopes of bringing them over, and Mussolini was much relieved at the more confident tone of the letter.

Unfortunately for Mussolini, the degree of Fascist incompetence had not yet been fully revealed. On 7 December the Italian Ambassador begged Ribbentrop for immediate help to relieve the situation on the other side of the Adriatic, where the Italians were in danger of a complete rout. When Hitler received the Ambassador the next day and asked for an early

'The World Will Hold Its meeting with the Duce, I him. To add to the Duce's t: Barrani, which began on 9 lapse of the Italian threat t retreat of Graziani's forces

In this crisis Hitler kept l diverted from his main ob cember and 19 December he which were designed not or Italian ally, but to carry ou

On 10 December Hitler o German Air Force to be mo from where they were to Suez Canal, and the Straits . On 13 December a direc Greece ('Operation Marita' task force was to be forme thrust across Bulgaria as so came, and to occupy the Tl The first objective was to de in Thrace, from which they c Italy, but if necessary the tended to the occupation of mainland.

On 18 December Hitler s for 'Barbarossa': 'The Gern be prepared to crush Soviet paign even before the end of t . . . ' The active cooperation and Rumania was counted or the Chief of the Finnish Ger garian Minister of War vis Antonescu, who had already s came to Berchtesgaden a s 1941.

Finally, on 19 December, Ambassador and promised i for Italy, on condition that go to Italy and advise on its u

ian workmen were to be sent to Germany. This was one more step in the reduction of Italy to the status of a German satellite.

With these measures put in train, Hitler was confident that he could master the crisis and still be ready for the attack on Russia by 15 May, the date fixed for the completion of preparations. He said nothing of such a possibility to Mussolini, but in the letter which he wrote to the Duce on the last day of 1940 he was cordial in tone and did his best to encourage Mussolini and to assure him of his own unshaken confidence in the future.

Early in the New Year the chiefs of the three Services were summoned to the Berghof, where a war council lasting two days was held, on 8-9 January 1941. Hitler reviewed what could be done for Italy. His general mood was still one of confidence. Britain could not win; she went on fighting only because of the hopes she entertained of American and Russian intervention. Hitler described Stalin as 'a cold-blooded blackmailer who would, if expedient, repudiate any written treaty at any time.'

Ten days later Mussolini reluctantly visited the Berghof. Smarting under the humiliations of Libya and Greece, he looked forward without relish to the Germans' patronizing condolences. To his surprise Hitler behaved with tact and cordiality.

Mussolini found Hitler in a very anti-Russian mood, and Ribbentrop called a sharp halt to ill-timed Italian attempts to improve their relations with Moscow. On the second day of the visit, Monday 20 January, Hitler made a speech of two hours on his coming intervention in Greece which much impressed the Italian military men by the grasp of technical matters it displayed. Demonstrating his points with expressive gestures on the map, he impressed upon his audience the picture of a master of strategy who had foreseen every possibility and who was in complete command of the situation.

'The World Will Hold Its

Hitler did not, however, attacking Russia. It could be in no position in 1941 to give operations about to begin. This argument could certainly second of Hitler's partners Japan, whose relations with Germany were precariously balanced on the edge of Japanese invasion of Manchuria. Japan and Russia had eyed each other with suspicion and hostility. Yet Hitler was bringing Japan into the war he was waging against Russia; on the contrary, he could divert her away from her eastern territories towards the south. Hitler wanted Japan to enter the war at the most possible moment, but it was not until after the attack on Russia, that he sought war in Europe, Hitler and Ribbentrop. Japanese Foreign Minister Matsumoto visited Berlin in March 1941, was vir- tually a question of time before British defeat. An attack by Japan would not only have a decisive effect on the war, but there was no further possibility of Japanese ambitions in Europe, it would also provide the circumstances formed a her favour.

Hitler admitted that there was no chance of missed them as slight. England to defend her possessions in the East, yet ready, and an attack would strengthen the tendency towards isolationism in the United States. If, none the less, Japan could not attack. Japan could rely on Germany would at once attack against Japan.

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Hitler did not, however, reveal his intention of attacking Russia. It could be argued that Italy was in no position in 1941 to give any help at all in the operations about to begin in Eastern Europe. But this argument could certainly not be applied to the second of Hitler's partners in the Tripartite Pact, Japan, whose relations with the U.S.S.R. had balanced precariously on the edge of war since the Japanese invasion of Manchuria in 1931. For ten years Japan and Russia had eyed each other with mutual suspicion and hostility. Yet Hitler made no effort to bring Japan into the war he was proposing to wage against Russia; on the contrary, he did everything he could to divert her away from Russia's Far Eastern territories towards the south.

Hitler wanted Japan to enter the war at the earliest possible moment, but it was against England, not against Russia, that he sought her cooperation. The war in Europe, Hitler and Ribbentrop assured Japanese Foreign Minister Matsuoka when he visited Berlin in March 1941, was virtually over; it was only a question of time before Britain was forced to admit defeat. An attack by Japan upon Singapore would not only have a decisive effect in convincing Britain that there was no further point in continuing the war, it would also provide the key to the realization of Japanese ambitions in Eastern Asia at a time when circumstances formed a unique combination in her favour.

Hitler admitted that there were risks, but he dismissed them as slight. England was in no position to defend her possessions in Asia. America was not yet ready, and an attack on Singapore would strengthen the tendency towards non-intervention in the United States. If, none the less, America should attack. Japan could rely on German support, and Germany would at once attack Russia if she moved against Japan.

In all their conversations Hitler and Ribbentrop

persistently urged on Matsuoka the importance of an attack on Singapore at the earliest possible date. Ribbentrop asked the Japanese Foreign Minister for maps of the British base, 'so that the Führer, who must certainly be considered the greatest expert of modern times on military matters, could advise Japan as to the best method for the attack on Singapore.' Japan, in short, was to play in the Far East the role for which Hitler had cast Franco's Spain and Mussolini's Italy: the capture of Singapore was the Far Eastern version of the capture of Gibraltar and the drive on Suez.

Had Hitler succeeded in persuading his allies to fall in with his plans, Britain's strength would have been stretched to the limit. This time it was not his strategy but his diplomacy that was at fault. Between the defeat of France and the attack on Russia, Hitler conducted a considerable number of diplomatic negotiations: it is a striking fact that, in every case where he was unable to use the threat of force if his wishes were not met, these negotiations failed. Spain, Italy, Vichy France, and now Japan, all chose different paths from those the Führer had mapped out for them. It is not difficult to see why. Hitler's overbearing manner and his total inability to cooperate with anyone on equal terms; Ribbentrop's belief that the most effective method of diplomacy was to nag and, if possible, to threaten, produced in most of their visitors only a feeling of relief when the interview came to an end. It was too patent on every occasion why the Germans wanted what they were asking for, too obvious who was to benefit from it.

To clumsiness the Germans added falseness. Hitler and Ribbentrop deceived their allies, even when there was no need. Nothing so much angered Mussolini as the fact that his allies told him lies and then sprang surprises on him. Hitler showed surprising loyalty to Mussolini, but it never extended to trusting him. His golden rule in politics remained: Trust nobody.

It is not surprising, then, that the Japanese Foreign Minister have concealed his purpose. Evidence pointing to the confidence in his ability to conquer Russia, in a single campaign of help from outside which won, might prove an embarrassment. He attacked Russia three months ago to warn the Japanese Government. Thereby Hitler lost his best ally and the Japanese quickly followed their own plans in ignorance. As in the case of Greece, the Germans had no surprise or complaint.

His absorption in the war for public appearances or occasions. In the whole of his speeches of any importance in the last few years, a fact of some importance, how great a part Hitler's story of the years before the war.

It was on his military gifts that Hitler now relied. In 1941 he looked forward eagerly to what he could once more give to Russia, the greatest of all his preliminary to which he was sweeping the British out of the way.

Between Germany and Greece, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, compliance had to be secured to reach the Greek frontier. Hitler had already accepted the status quo and throughout the winter the trains steadily moved across Bulgaria a sharp tussle for

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tween the Germans and the Russians. The Germans won, and on the night of 28 February German forces from Rumania crossed the Danube and began to occupy key positions throughout the country. The following day Bulgaria joined the Tripartite Pact.

Yugoslavia proved more difficult. Recognizing this, Hitler did not ask for the passage of German troops, but he put strong pressure on the Yugoslav Government to accede to the Tripartite Pact. Hitler's bribe was the offer of Salonika, and it was taken. On 25 March, the Pact was signed in Vienna. Given favourable weather, Hitler now told Ciano, the decision in Greece could be brought about in a few days.

Hitler's satisfaction, however, was premature. On the night of 26-7 March a group of Yugoslav officers, rebelling against their Government's adherence to the Axis cause, carried out a *coup d'état* in Belgrade in the name of the young King Peter II.

The insolence of a nation which ventured to cross him roused Hitler's fury. A hurried council of war summoned to the Chancellery learned of the Führer's decision to inflict exemplary punishment on Yugoslavia, while the Japanese Foreign Minister was kept waiting in another room. Hitler took the decision, then and there, to postpone the attack on Russia up to four weeks, so completely was he prepared to sacrifice everything to the satisfaction of his desire for revenge.

Never was the man's essential character more clearly illuminated. The brutal tone of the orders reflects this mood. Not content with taking steps to ward off any threat to his plans from Yugoslavia, he was bent upon the entire destruction of the state and its partition. The blow, he insisted, must be carried out with 'merciless harshness'.

The military preparations for this new and unexpected campaign had to be improvised, but Hitler issued his directive that very day, and again included the sentence: 'Yugoslavia, despite her protestations

'The World Will Hold Its of loyalty, must be crushed as swiftly as possible. Solini on the evening of the cover the Yugoslav-Albanian time imperious messages to Bulgaria, and General von to Budapest to coordinate be taken by the satellite of Yugoslavia. Hitler's political provision not only for the greed of Yugoslavia's neighbouring the Yugoslav State to the Croats, whose grade Government had long agents.

By 5 April, ten days after of the *coup d'état*, Hitler had tions, and at dawn on the 6 pushed across the frontier bombers took off for Belgrade Punishment'. Flying at low pilots systematically bombed days, killing more than seven

Simultaneously, other German from Bulgaria began the operations, mounted with rapidly carried to success. O Army was driven to capitulate Greeks, after their six months the Italians, were forced to the British troops, who had than two months before, began the 27th the German tanks on 4 May Hitler presented the Reichstag. The Balkan war begun in an attempt to assert ended in a German triumph with the Italian partner of the Axis implication a public humiliation

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of loyalty, must be considered as an enemy and crushed as swiftly as possible.' Hitler wrote to Mus- solini on the evening of the 27th, requesting him to cover the Yugoslav-Albanian frontier. At the same time imperious messages were sent to Hungary and Bulgaria, and General von Paulus hastily dispatched to Budapest to coordinate the military measures to be taken by the satellite forces against the isolated Yugoslavs. Hitler's political preparations contained provision not only for stirring up the hatred and greed of Yugoslavia's neighbours, but also for disrupting the Yugoslav State internally by appealing to the Croats, whose grievances against the Bel- grade Government had long been fostered by Nazi agents.

By 5 April, ten days after he had received the news of the *coup d'état*, Hitler had completed his prepara- tions, and at dawn on the 6th, while German forces pushed across the frontiers, squadrons of German bombers took off for Belgrade to carry out 'Operation Punishment'. Flying at rooftop height, the German pilots systematically bombed the city for three whole days, killing more than seventeen thousand people.

Simultaneously, other German divisions operating from Bulgaria began the invasion of Greece. Both operations, mounted with overwhelming force, were rapidly carried to success. On 17 April the Yugoslav Army was driven to capitulate; six days later the Greeks, after their six months' heroic resistance to the Italians, were forced to follow suit. On 22 April the British troops, who had landed in Greece less than two months before, began their evacuation. On the 27th the German tanks rolled into Athens, and on 4 May Hitler presented his report to a cheering Reichstag. The Balkan war, which Mussolini had begun in an attempt to assert his independence, had ended in a German triumph which completely eclipsed the Italian partner of the Axis, and which was by implication a public humiliation of the Duce, who

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had been driven by his failures to turn to Germany for help.

In his speech to the Reichstag Hitler did his best to disguise this unpalatable fact, but the real relationship between Berlin and Rome was revealed by the partition of Yugoslavia. Italy's claims to the divided state were treated on a level with those of the other satellites, and the Duce had perforce to accept Hitler's unilateral decisions.

Italian dependence upon Germany was further emphasized by the course of events in North Africa. Italian failure to check the British advance led to the British conquest of Cyrenaica. Hitler discounted the military danger in losing North Africa, but he was worried about the effect on Italy. Mussolini, he decided, must be given effective assistance. Recognizing that air support was no longer enough, he reluctantly agreed to the transfer of an armoured division from the Balkans and secured Mussolini's consent to the creation of a unified command of all mechanized and motorized forces in the desert under General Rommel.

Rommel took not only the British, but the German High Command, by surprise. Ordered to submit plans for consideration by 20 April, he actually began his attack on 31 March, and by 12 April had driven right across Cyrenaica and recaptured Bardia within a few miles of the Egyptian frontier.

Indeed, by the early summer of 1941, the situation in the eastern Mediterranean had been changed out of recognition. The British had been thrown out of Greece and pushed back to the Egyptian frontier. In Iraq the pro-German Prime Minister, Rashid Ali, led a revolt against the British garrison, and at the beginning of May appealed to Hitler for help for which Syria, under the authority of Vichy, provided a convenient base. Finally, between 20 May and 27 May, German parachute troops captured the island of Crete.

With the small British to the limit to hold Egypt appeared to the German that it needed only a share of Britain's Middle East. Accordingly, on 30 May, for a 'decisive Egypt-Suez' of 1941 which [he argued] the British Empire than the anxiety revealed in Churchill's dispatches at this time lent Raeder's arguments. Even then being concentrated could, if diverted to the Middle East, have dealt a fatal blow to the Middle East.

But Hitler, his mind wh of Russia, declined to look anything more than a side to the Italians with a stiff In vain both Raeder and R interest in the possibilities

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With the small British forces available stretched to the limit to hold Egypt, Palestine, and Iraq, it appeared to the German Naval Staff and to Rommel that it needed only a sharp push to destroy the whole edifice of Britain's Middle Eastern defence system. Accordingly, on 30 May, Raeder revived his demand for a 'decisive Egypt-Suez offensive for the autumn of 1941 which [he argued] would be more deadly to the British Empire than the capture of London'. The anxiety revealed in Churchill's and General Wavell's dispatches at this time lends retrospective support to Raeder's arguments. Even a quarter of the forces then being concentrated for the attack on Russia could, if diverted to the Mediterranean theatre of war in time, have dealt a fatal blow to British control of the Middle East.

But Hitler, his mind wholly set upon the invasion of Russia, declined to look at the Mediterranean as anything more than a sideshow which could be left to the Italians with a stiffening of German troops. In vain both Raeder and Rommel tried to arouse his interest in the possibilities open to him in the south.

Hitler's mind had been made up at the beginning of the year. On 15 February he announced that any large-scale operations in the Mediterranean must wait until the autumn of 1941, when the defeat of Russia would have been accomplished. Then Malta could be taken and the British expelled from the Mediterranean—but not before. The capture of Crete was the end of the operations in the Balkans, not a stepping-stone to Suez and the Middle East. On 25 May Hitler gave orders to support Rashid Ali's revolt in Iraq, but help was to be limited to a military mission, some assistance from the German Air Force and the supply of arms.

All this time the building up of the German forces in the east had steadily continued. On 3 February General Halder presented the Army's detailed es-

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imate of the situation to the Führer. The huge forces to be engaged and the vast distances to be covered excited Hitler's imagination, and he was in no mood to listen to doubts. He insisted that the Russians must be prevented from falling back into the depths of their country. Everything depended upon the encirclement of the main Russian forces as near to the frontier as possible. The participation of Finland, Rumania, and Hungary in the attack was assured, but Hitler added that—with the exception of Rumania—agreements could be made only at the eleventh hour, in order to keep the secret well guarded. After examining the operational plans for each Army Group, Hitler expressed himself as satisfied. 'It must be remembered,' he declared, 'that the main aim is to gain possession of the Baltic States and Leningrad. . . . When "Barbarossa" begins, the world will hold its breath and make no comment.' By a double bluff, meanwhile, the concentration of German troops in the east was to be represented as a feint to disguise renewed German preparations for the invasion of England and the attack on Greece.

A month later, early in March, Hitler held another military conference, to which he summoned all the senior commanders who were to take part in the attack. Hitler presented the invasion as a step forced on him by Russia's imperialistic designs in the Baltic and the Balkans. A Russian attack on Germany was a certainty, he assured them, and must be forestalled. A secret agreement had even been arrived at between Russia and England, and this was the reason for the British refusal to accept German peace offers. 'The war against Russia', he continued, 'will be such that it cannot be conducted in a chivalrous fashion. This struggle is one of ideologies and racial differences and will have to be conducted with unprecedented, merciless and unrelenting harshness.' Breaches of international law by German soldiers were to be excused since Russia had not participated in the Hague Con-

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The generals were even posals for the administrapupied in the east. A spe March provided that 'in t Reichsführer S.S. [Himml of the Führer, with spec tion of the political admir limits of these tasks, the l independently and under h:

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On 20 April Hitler app the half-forgotten figure wh in forming his views on (east, as Commissioner for tl It was an unhappy choice. l of the S.S. corps d'élite, alre bility for laying the racial Order in the east, and Görin the Four-Year Plan, claim: the economic exploitation (

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vention and had no rights under it. A number of the
generals protested after the conference that such a
way of waging war was intolerable. The most
Brauchitsch felt able to do was surreptitiously to
issue an order instructing officers to preserve strict
discipline and to punish excesses.

The generals were even more disturbed at the pro-
posals for the administration of the territories oc-
cupied in the east. A special directive issued on 13
March provided that 'in the area of operations, the
Reichsführer S.S. [Himmler] is entrusted, on behalf
of the Führer, with special tasks for the prepara-
tion of the political administration. . . . Within the
limits of these tasks, the Reichsführer S.S. shall act
independently and under his own responsibility'.

This could only mean that Himmler and the S.S.
were to be given a free hand to stamp out all traces
of the Soviet system. The directive also provided for
handing over the areas occupied to the political ad-
ministration of special commissioners appointed by
Hitler himself, and for the immediate economic ex-
ploitation of the territory seized under the direction
of Göring. Even the most unpolitical of German
generals can have had little doubt what all this
amounted to. Hitler was taking steps in advance to
make sure that no scruples or conservatism on the
part of the Army Commanders should stand in the
way of the treatment of the occupied territories on
thorough-going National Socialist lines.

On 20 April Hitler appointed Alfred Rosenberg,
the half-forgotten figure who had played a great part
in forming his views on German expansion in the
east, as Commissioner for the East European Region.
It was an unhappy choice. Himmler, as Reichsführer
of the S.S. corps d'élite, already claimed the responsi-
bility for laying the racial foundations of the New
Order in the east, and Göring, as Plenipotentiary for
the Four-Year Plan, claimed the right to organize
the economic exploitation of the territories in the

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east so as to guarantee Germany's present and future needs in food and raw materials. Against two such powerful empire builders as Himmler and Göring, Rosenberg was quite unable to defend his own position, and there was thus from the beginning a conflict of authority in the east between the Army, Himmler, Göring, and the nominal Commissioner, Rosenberg, which only became worse as time went on.

The ruthlessness of the German treatment of the occupied territories in the east was not fortuitous; it was part of a methodical system of exploitation and resettlement planned in advance and entered upon with a full appreciation of its consequences. The overriding need, as defined in a directive of Göring's Economic Staff East dated 23 May 1941, was the use of the food-producing areas of the east to supplement Germany's and Europe's supplies both during and after the war. The directive, in discussing the consequences for Russia's industrial population, noted: 'Many tens of millions of people in the industrial areas will become redundant and will either die or have to emigrate to Siberia. Any attempt to save the population there from death by starvation by importing surpluses from the Black Soil Zone would be at the expense of supplies to Europe. It would reduce Germany's staying-power in the war, and would undermine Germany's and Europe's power to resist the blockade. This must be clearly and absolutely understood.'

* This, it should be pointed out, is not Hitler talking late at night upon the Obersalzberg; this is the translation of those grim fantasies into the sober directives and office memoranda of a highly organized administration, methodically planning economic operations which must result in the starvation of millions. Not far away, in the offices of Himmler's S.S., equally methodical calculations were being made of how this process could be accelerated by the use of

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Early in May Stalin too the Council of People's C sally regarded as indicati with which only Stalin h ately afterwards, howeve reports of troop concentra the U.S.S.R. withdrew its tions of the exiled Govern and Yugoslavia, and on 12 with the pro-Nazi Govern All through this period t under the strictest restrai cation, and as late as 14 J ment categorically denying many and Russia.

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gas chambers (including mobile vans) for the elimination of the racially impure.

On 30 April with the Balkan operations completed, apart from the pendant of Crete, Hitler fixed 22 June as the new date for the opening of the attack in the east. By May the armoured divisions which had overrun Greece were on their way north to join the concentration of German troops in Poland, and an ominous lull settled over the battle fronts.

In order to camouflage his intentions Hitler ordered Russian orders for goods placed in Germany to be fulfilled and deliveries maintained till the last moment. The Russians continued to make a prompt dispatch of raw materials and food to Germany up to the day of the attack. Indeed, in the last three months before the attack, the Soviet Government, while building up its defences in the west, did everything it could to conciliate and appease the Germans.

Early in May Stalin took over the Chairmanship of the Council of People's Commissars, a step universally regarded as indicating the prospect of a crisis with which only Stalin himself could deal. Immediately afterwards, however, on 8 May, Tass denied reports of troop concentrations in the west; on 9 May the U.S.S.R. withdrew its recognition from the legations of the exiled Governments of Belgium, Norway, and Yugoslavia, and on 12 May established relations with the pro-Nazi Government of Rashid Ali in Iraq. All through this period the Soviet Press was kept under the strictest restraint in order to avoid provocation, and as late as 14 June Tass put out a statement categorically denying difficulties between Germany and Russia.

There is not a scrap of evidence to show that, in the summer of 1941, the Soviet Government had any intention of attacking Germany. Warnings from the British (who knew the date fixed for the invasion

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before the end of April) were dismissed by the Russians as trouble making. But Hitler was interested only in reports that could be used to support the pretext for his decision, a decision reached long before without regard to Russia's attitude or the threat which he now alleged of Russian preparations to strike westwards.

In May Antonescu paid his third visit to Hitler, this time at Munich, and agreed that Rumania should take part in the attack. At the end of the month the Finnish Chief of Staff spent a week in Germany to discuss detailed arrangements for cooperation between the two armies. Still Hitler said nothing to Mussolini. When they met at the Brenner on 2 June the most that Ribbentrop admitted was that Russo-German relations were not so good as they had been. Stalin, he told Ciano, was unlikely to commit the folly of attacking Germany, but if he did the Russian forces would be smashed to pieces.

A fortnight later Ribbentrop was more forthcoming, or more indiscreet, when he met Ciano at Venice. Ciano asked his colleague about the rumours of an impending German attack on Russia.

'Dear Ciano,' was Ribbentrop's expansive reply, 'I cannot tell you anything as yet because every decision is locked in the impenetrable bosom of the Führer. However, one thing is certain: if we attack, the Russia of Stalin will be erased from the map within eight weeks.'

From Venice Ribbentrop sent a telegram to Budapest warning the Hungarians to be ready. On 18 June a Non-Aggression Pact between Germany and Turkey was announced. On the 14th Hitler had summoned a conference of his commanders-in-chief in the Reich Chancellery. The generals showed none of the doubts they later claimed to have felt about the Russian 'adventure'. Now, one after another they explained their operational plans to the Führer, while Hitler nodded his approval. Satisfied with the prepa-

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rations that had been Hitler left for his new ('Wolf's Lair'), near R

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As so often before, H self at length. Britain in the hope of aid fr verting to their old e Germany from launchi west by a massive conc Until he had safeguar he dared not take the ri

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At dawn on 22 June the French had signed

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rations that had been made, in the following week Hitler left for his new headquarters, Wolfsschanze ('Wolf's Lair'), near Rastenburg in East Prussia.

There, on 21 June, the eve of the attack, he dictated a letter to Mussolini. It was the first official news Mussolini had been given of his intentions.

As so often before, Hitler proceeded to justify himself at length. Britain had lost the war, but held out in the hope of aid from Russia. The Russians, reverting to their old expansionist policy, prevented Germany from launching a large-scale attack in the west by a massive concentration of forces in the east. Until he had safeguarded his rear, Hitler declared, he dared not take the risk of attacking England.

Once again Mussolini was roused in the middle of the night with the usual urgent message from the Führer. While the Duce was still reading Hitler's letter the attack was already beginning. From the Arctic Circle to the Black Sea more than a hundred and fifty German, Finnish, and Rumanian divisions were pressing forward across the Russian frontiers. The German forces, divided into three Army Groups commanded by Leeb, Bock, and Rundstedt, included nineteen armoured divisions and twelve motorized, supported by over 2,700 aircraft.

In the 1920s Hitler, then an unsuccessful Bavarian politician, whose political following numbered no more than a few thousands, had written at the end of *Mein Kampf*: 'And so we National Socialist. . . when we speak of new territory in Europe today we must think principally of Russia and her border vassal states. Destiny itself seems to wish to point out the way to us here. . . This colossal Empire in the east is ripe for dissolution, and the end of the Jewish domination in Russia will also be the end of Russia as a state.'

At dawn on 22 June 1941, one year to the day since the French had signed the armistice at Compiègne,

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Hitler believed that he was about to fulfil his own prophecy. He concluded his letter to Mussolini with these words: 'Since I struggled through to this decision, I again feel spiritually free. The partnership with the Soviet Union, in spite of the complete sincerity of my efforts to bring about a final conciliation, was nevertheless often very irksome to me, for in some way or other it seemed to me to be a break with my whole origin, my concepts and my former obligations. I am happy now to be delivered from this torment.'

It was to prove an irrevocable decision.

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The novelty lay not so much as in the decision that hitherto regarded as independent Britain first. Forced to intervene were not going to be blunted, Hitler convinced he ready virtually defeated. position, in the near future the Continent.

Most important of all was of his conviction that they were invincible, partly because of Russian strength, that they defeated in a single campaign taking a risk in invading. He was convinced that the war in three months, or three at the most, but acted on it, refusing

June 1941

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE UNACHIEVED EMPIRE

1941-3

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At the time Hitler gave two reasons for his decision to attack Russia: the first, that Russia was preparing to attack Germany in the summer of 1941; the second, that Britain's refusal to acknowledge defeat was due to her hopes of Russian and American intervention, and that Britain had actually entered into an alliance with Russia against Germany.

At most these arguments reinforced a decision already reached on other grounds. Hitler invaded Russia for the simple but sufficient reason that he had always meant to establish the foundations of his thousand-year Reich by the annexation of the territory lying between the Vistula and the Urals.

The novelty lay not so much in the decision to turn east as in the decision to drop the provision he had hitherto regarded as indispensable, a settlement with Britain first. Forced to recognize that the British were not going to be bluffed or bombed into capitulation, Hitler convinced himself that Britain was already virtually defeated. She was certainly not in a position, in the near future, to threaten his hold over the Continent.

Most important of all was the belief, a result partly of his conviction that the German Armed Forces were invincible, partly of an underestimate of Russian strength, that the Soviet armies could be defeated in a single campaign. Hitler knew that he was taking a risk in invading Russia, but he was convinced that the war in the east would be over in two months, or three at the most. He not only said this, but acted on it, refusing to make any preparations

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for a winter campaign. A series of sharp defeats, and ~~he~~ was certain that Stalin's Government would fall. 'We have only to kick in the door,' Hitler told Jodl, 'and the whole rotten structure will come crashing down.' Hitler was not blind to the numerical superiority of the Russians, but he was certain that the political weakness of the Soviet régime, together with the technical superiority of the Germans, would give him a quick victory.

The opening of the campaign seemed to justify Hitler's optimism. The German armoured divisions struck deep into Russian territory. By 5 July they had reached the Dnieper, by the 16th Smolensk, little more than two hundred miles from Moscow.

But, although the German troops rapidly gained ground, they did not succeed in destroying the Russian armies, and all the time the German Army was being drawn deeper in.

At this point a divergence began to appear between Hitler's and the Army High Command's views of the objectives to be gained. Hitler laid the greatest stress on clearing the Baltic States and capturing Leningrad; once the initial battles were over, the Centre Army Group was to support this northerly drive through the Baltic States and not push forward to Moscow. At the same time the Southern Army Group was to drive south-east towards Kiev and the Dnieper, in order to secure the agricultural and industrial resources of the Ukraine.

Brauchitsch and Halder believed that the best chance of catching and destroying the Russian forces was to press on to Moscow. They were in favour of concentrating, not dispersing, the German effort. This view was supported by Bock, the Commander-in-Chief of the Centre Army Group, and by his two panzer commanders, Guderian and Hoth, but it was rejected by Hitler, who insisted on ordering part of Bock's mobile forces to assist the northern army group's drive on Leningrad and the rest to wheel

The Unachieved Empire, 1:
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south and support the advance into the Ukraine. Brauchitsch temporized, the dispute rumbled on, and the Centre Army Group remained halted east of Smolensk.

By September Hitler was beginning to lose interest in Leningrad, and he agreed to launch a major offensive against Moscow, but he insisted that the battle of encirclement in the Ukraine must be put first. Reluctantly the General Staff were forced to assent, but General Halder has since argued that this was the turning-point of the campaign and that Hitler threw away the chance of inflicting a decisive defeat on the Russians for the sake of a prestige victory and the capture of the industrial region of the Ukraine.

For not only had this dispute seriously worsened the relations between Hitler and his generals, it also led to the waste of valuable time. The southern encirclement proved a great success and over 600,000 Russians were taken prisoner east of Kiev, but it was late in September before the battle was ended. The onset of the autumn rains, which turned the Russian countryside, with its poor roads, into a quagmire, promised ill for the attack on Moscow, which the Army High Command had wanted to launch in August. Beyond the autumn loomed the threat of the Russian winter. Hitler, however, elated by his success in the south, now pushed forward the attack on Moscow which he had held back for so long.

On 2 October the advance of the Centre Army Group was resumed, after a halt of two months. On 8 October Orel was captured, and the next day Otto Dietrich, the Reich Press Chief, caused a sensation with the announcement that the war in the east was over. Between Vyazma and Bryansk, another 600,000 Russians were trapped and taken prisoner. A week later the German spearheads reached Mozhaisk, only eighty miles from the Russian capital.

Yet even now Hitler could not make up his mind to concentrate on one objective. In the north Leeb

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was ordered at the same time to capture Leningrad, link up with the Finns and push on to cut the Murmansk railway. In the south Rundstedt was ordered to clear the Black Sea coast (including the Crimea) and strike beyond Rostov, eastwards to the Volga and south-eastwards to the Caucasus. 'We laughed aloud when we received these orders,' Rundstedt later declared, 'for winter had already come and we were almost seven hundred kilometres from these cities.'

Thus, with forces which were numerically inferior to the Russians, and fanned out across a thousand-mile front, Hitler had fallen into the trap against which he had warned his generals before the invasion began, that of allowing the Russians to retreat and draw the Germans farther and farther into the illimitable depths of their hinterland. When the dreaded winter broke over them, the German armies, despite their victories and advances, had still not captured Leningrad and Moscow, or destroyed the Russian capacity to continue the war.

Once the attack on Russia had been launched, the war on the Eastern Front absorbed all Hitler's thoughts and energies. Not content with fixing the strategic objectives of his armies in the east, he began to interfere in the detailed conduct of operation.

It was not only the military operations in the east which absorbed him: he saw himself about to realize his historical destiny by the foundation of a new German Empire in the lands conquered from the Russians. The prospect gripped and excited his imagination. From this period, the summer of 1941, date the records of his conversations taken under Bormann's supervision and subsequently published as his talk.

They give a vivid impression of Hitler's mood at the peak of his fantastic career, the peer as he saw himself of Napoleon, Bismarck, and Frederick the Great, pursuing, to use his own words, 'the Cyclopean task

The Unachieved Empire, which the building of an empire man'.

On the evening of 17 October (as he believed) already imagination ride as he tallies the Asian desert with two or three Germany, Scandinavia, the America. 'We shan't settle we'll let them go to pieces above all, no remorse on duty without obligations concerned. To struggle against the fleas, provide German papers—very little of that selves, perhaps, to setting under our control. For the enough to understand our but won't get themselves run out.

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Mussolini visited Hitler's quarters towards the end of the schanze was hidden in the miles from any human habitation the forest produced a feeling who went there.

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which the building of an empire means for a single man'.

On the evening of 17 October, with the Russians (as he believed) already defeated, Hitler let his imagination ride as he talked of populating the Russian desert with two or three million people from Germany, Scandinavia, the Western countries, and America. 'We shan't settle in the Russian towns and we'll let them go to pieces without intervening. And above all, no remorse on this subject! We're absolutely without obligations as far as these people are concerned. To struggle against the hovels, chase away the fleas, provide German teachers, bring out newspapers—very little of that for us! We'll confine ourselves, perhaps, to setting up a radio transmitter, under our control. For the rest, let them know just enough to understand our highway signs, so that they won't get themselves run over by our vehicles.

'For them the word "liberty" means the right to wash on feast days . . . There's only one duty: to Germanize this country by the immigration of Germans and to look upon the natives as Redskins.'

Mussolini visited Hitler at his East Prussian headquarters towards the end of August 1941. Wolfsschanze was hidden in the heart of a thick forest, miles from any human habitation. The dim light of the forest produced a feeling of gloom in everyone who went there.

Two conversations took place between the Führer and the Duce on the 25th. The first meeting was taken up with an exposition of the military situation in the east, during which Mussolini was reduced to the role of admiring listener. Hitler, he noted, spoke with great confidence and precision, but admitted that faulty intelligence work had completely misled him as to the size and excellence of the Russian forces as well as the determination with which they fought. In their second talk, the same evening, the two dictators

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ranged over the rest of the world. Hitler spoke bitterly of Franco and was evasive on the subject of the French, who were, as always, the object of jealous complaints by Mussolini. He showed some embarrassment at the Duce's pressing offer of more Italian troops for the Eastern Front, but 'concluded by expressing the most lively desire to come to Italy—when the war is over—in order to pass some time in Florence, a city dear to him above all others for the harmony of its art and its natural beauty.'

Later in the week Hitler and Mussolini flew to Rundstedt's headquarters at Uman in the Ukraine. There Mussolini inspected an Italian division and lunched with the Führer in the open air, surrounded by a crowd of soldiers. At the end of the meal Hitler walked about among the crowd talking informally, while Mussolini, to his annoyance, was left with Rundstedt. Mussolini had his revenge, however, on the return flight, when he insisted on piloting the plane. Hitler's own pilot, Bauer, remained at the controls all the time, but Hitler never took his eyes off Mussolini and sat rigid in his seat. The Führer's congratulations were mingled with undisguised relief. Mussolini was childishly delighted and insisted on his performance being recorded in the communiqué.

The visit appears to have been organized more for propaganda purposes than to provide an occasion for serious discussions. Earlier in August, Churchill and Roosevelt had met off the coast of Newfoundland and from there issued the joint declaration of war aims known as the Atlantic Charter. The meeting of Hitler and Mussolini and the final communiqué, with the prominence which it gave to the slogan of the 'European New Order', was designed as a counter-demonstration. The dictators pledged themselves to remove the causes of war, eradicate the threat of Bolshevism, put an end to 'plutocratic exploitation', and establish close and peaceful collaboration among the peoples of Europe. This was an expansion of

The Unachieved Empire

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Hitler was in Munich of the 8 November he developed an argument companion theme to the propaganda—Germany divisions and privileges Germany in the New Eu

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Hitler's earlier idea of a 'Monroe doctrine for Europe'
directed against the Anglo-Saxon powers.

Hitler was in Munich for the traditional celebra-
tion of the 8 November anniversary. In his speech
he developed an argument which was to provide a
companion theme to the European New Order in Nazi
propaganda—Germany as the society in which class
divisions and privileges had been abolished, the New
Germany in the New Europe.

Confident that the Russian campaign would be
finished before the snows, Hitler and his staff had
made no provision for winter clothing to be issued to
the troops. From early November the Germans were
fighting in sub-zero temperatures, intensified by a
bitter wind, the few hours of daylight and the long
nights, and fighting in an unfamiliar land against an
enemy inured to the conditions, warmly clothed and
equipped for winter operations.

But Hitler insisted that the Russian resistance was
on the verge of collapse. Warnings and appeals were
of no avail. He categorically refused to admit that he
had been wrong. Whatever the cost in men's lives, his
armies must make good his boasts, and he drove them
on relentlessly. On 2 December Kluge's Fourth Army
made a last desperate effort to break through the
Russian defences in the forests west of Moscow. A
few parties of troops actually reached the outskirts
of the capital, but they had to be pulled back.

At that moment, on 6 December, to the complete
surprise of Hitler and the German High Command,
the Russians launched a major counter-offensive
along the whole Central Front with one hundred fresh
divisions, and swept away the German threat to Mos-
cow. The German troops, already driven to the limit
of endurance, wavered; for a few days there was
great confusion and the threat of a Russian break-
through. Hitler was faced with the most serious
military crisis of the war so far. Even if he sur-

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mounted it, one thing was already clear: the great gamble had failed and 1941 would end without the long-heralded victory in the east.

On 7 December, the day after the Russians opened their offensive to relieve Moscow, the Japanese took the American Fleet by surprise in Pearl Harbor. At the beginning of the month, Oshima, the Japanese ambassador in Berlin, had informed the German Government that Japanese-American relations had reached a crisis and that war might be imminent. In fact the Japanese task force had already sailed for Pearl Harbour on 25 November, but taking a leaf out of Hitler's book, the Japanese kept their own counsel and the news of the attack on Pearl Harbour came as a surprise to Hitler.

The one course which Hitler had never recommended to the Japanese had been to attack the U.S.A. It might have been expected therefore that the Führer would show some irritation at the independent course adopted by the Tokyo Government in face of his advice. On the contrary, he appears to have been delighted with the news of Pearl Harbour. He rapidly decided to follow the Japanese example by declaring war on the United States himself. When Ribbentrop pointed out that the Tripartite Pact only bound Germany to assist Japan in the event of an attack, and that to declare war on the U.S.A. would be to add to the number of Germany's opponents, Hitler dismissed these as unimportant considerations.

Hitherto, Hitler had shown considerable patience in face of the growing aid given by the U.S. Government to the British. But he was coming to the conclusion that a virtual state of war already existed with the U.S.A. and that there was no point in delaying the clash which he regarded as inevitable. Knowing nothing of the United States, Hitler disastrously underestimated American strength. The mixture of races in its population, as well as the freedom and lack of authoritarian discipline in its

The Unachieved Empire,

life, predisposed him to re-bourgeois democracy, incautary effort. The ease with their blow at Pearl Harudices.

Another factor in Hitler to assess. The prospect of world excited his imagination and stimulated destiny which was the drive by the feeling that his lives of millions of human speech of 11 December, in many's declaration of war grateful to Providence the leadership in this historic revision on a unique scale the Creator. ! !

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life, predisposed him to regard it as another decadent bourgeois democracy, incapable of any sustained mili- tary effort. The ease with which the Japanese struck their blow at Pearl Harbor confirmed these prej- udices.

Another factor in Hitler's decision is more difficult to assess. The prospect of a war embracing the whole world excited his imagination with its taste for the grandiose and stimulated that sense of historic destiny which was the drug on which he fed. Elated by the feeling that his decisions would affect the lives of millions of human beings, he declared in the speech of 11 December, in which he announced Germany's declaration of war on America: 'I can only be grateful to Providence that it entrusted me with the leadership in this historic struggle. . . . A historical revision on a unique scale has been imposed on us by the Creator.'

Most of Hitler's speech on 11 December was devoted to abuse of the America of President Roosevelt, whom he depicted as the creature of the Jews. He drew a comparison between the success of National Socialism in rescuing Germany from the Depression and what he described as the catastrophic failure of the American New Deal: it was the desire to cover up this failure which led Roosevelt to divert American attention by a provocative foreign policy.

At the end of his speech Hitler announced that a new agreement had been concluded between Germany, Italy, and Japan, binding them not to conclude a separate armistice or peace with the U.S.A. or with England, without mutual consent.

It was with Russia, however, far more than with the United States or Great Britain, that Hitler was still concerned in the winter of 1941-2. The Russian counter-offensive, launched on 6 December, faced him with a crisis, which, if mishandled, might well have turned to disaster.

Hitler rose to the occasion. In face of the profes-

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sional advice of his generals and in total disregard of the cost to the troops, he ordered the German armies to stand and fight where they were, categorically refusing all requests to withdraw. This order was enforced in the most ruthless fashion. By this remarkable display of determination he succeeded in holding the German lines.

The toll taken by the Russians, and even more by the terrible winter, was high. Thousands of German soldiers died of the cold, and in certain places Hitler had reluctantly to accept the withdrawal of decimated German divisions. But the Russians did not break through, and when the spring came, the German Army still stood on a line deep in the interior of Russia. More than this, by drawing on his own country and his allies, Hitler brought up the forces on the Eastern Front to sufficient strength to enable him to propose a resumption of the offensive in 1942.

The winter crisis marks a decisive stage in the development of Hitler's relations with the Army which was to have considerable consequences for the future.

After the invasion of Russia there was no longer a High Command or General Staff in Germany. Hitler ordered the C.-in-C. of the Army and his Staff (O.K.H.) to confine themselves to the conduct of the war in the east (excluding Finland). The other fronts were to be left to his own Supreme Command of the Armed Forces (O.K.W.). But the O.K.W. was in turn excluded from the Eastern Front, and in any case lacked the independent authority which the High Command of the Army traditionally possessed in Germany. The responsibility for the conduct of operations was thus divided, and the strategic picture of the war as a whole remained the concern of Hitler alone.

Hitler was far from being a fool in military matters. He had read widely in military literature

and he took an eager interest in matters as the design of a politician gave him notable aid. He was a master of the psychology of surprise, but he was not prepared to take and accept

His faults as a military commander were various. He had too little respect for the obstinate and opinionated. His military education, World War, to which he attached great importance, had been extremely limited. He had no experience of troops in the field or learned to command as a staff officer. He lacked the imagination to turn grandiose conceptions into actions. The interest which he took in details, instead of compensating for his lack of vision, only made them clearer. Moreover, he was self to become intoxicated with the crude numbers of men or of resources, in which he delighted to repeat any attempt to criticize or analyze.

These were precisely the faults which prevented the professional training of the general staff. A combination of Hitler's personality with the orthodox and the General Staff could have been a disaster. But this was ruled out by Hitler's attitude towards the generals.

Well aware of the Army's role as the embodiment of the nation, Hitler was quick to suspect its leaders of being if not active disloyalty, toward the German generals. Hitler completely broke the National Socialist idea. The Army was the last stronghold of the old Prussian tradition, and Hitler never forgot that the German movement was never far below the surface. He perfectly well that the Officer Corps was an upstart, as 'the Bohemian corps

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and he took an eager interest in such technical matters as the design of weapons. His gifts as a politician gave him notable advantages in war as well. He was a master of the psychological side, quick to see the value of surprise, bold in the risks he was prepared to take and receptive of unorthodox ideas.

His faults as a military leader were equally obvious. He had too little respect for facts, he was obstinate and opinionated. His experience in the First World War, to which he attached undue importance, had been extremely limited. He had never commanded troops in the field or learned how to handle armies as a staff officer. He lacked the training to translate his grandiose conceptions into concrete terms of operations. The interest which he took in technical details, instead of compensating for these deficiencies, only made them clearer. Moreover, he allowed himself to become intoxicated with figures, with the crude numbers of men or of armaments production, which he delighted to repeat from memory without any attempt to criticize or analyse them.

These were precisely the faults which the professional training of the generals qualified them to correct. A combination of Hitler's often brilliant intuition with the orthodox and methodical planning of the General Staff could have been highly effective. But this was ruled out by Hitler's distrust of the generals.

Well aware of the Army's unrivalled prestige as the embodiment of the national tradition, he was quick to suspect its leaders of a lack of enthusiasm, if not active disloyalty, towards the new régime. The German generals. Hitler complained, had no faith in the National Socialist idea. The German Officer Corps was the last stronghold of the old conservative tradition, and Hitler never forgot this. His class-resentment was never far below the surface; he knew perfectly well that the Officer Corps despised him as an upstart, as 'the Bohemian corporal', and he responded

with a barely concealed contempt for the 'gentlemen' who wrote 'von' before their names and had never served as privates in the trenches.

To political distrust and social resentment was added Hitler's inveterate suspicion of the expert. Nothing so infuriated him as the 'objectivity' of the trained mind which refused to accept his own instinct for seeing all problems in the simplest possible terms. It required great tact to get him to accept a view which differed from his own, and this was a quality which few of the German generals possessed.

So long as the German Army was successful the underlying lack of confidence between Hitler and his generals could be papered over. But the moment Hitler found himself faced with a situation like that on the Eastern Front in the winter of 1941-2 he made it only too clear that he had no faith at all in the High Command's ability to deal with it. Brauchitsch, feeling that he was placed in an impossible position, offered his resignation on 7 December. Ten days later Hitler accepted his offer, and on the 19th announced that he would himself take over the command-in-chief of the German Army in the field. This step was the logical conclusion to the policy of concentrating all power in his own hands which Hitler had steadily pursued since 1933.

To the German people Brauchitsch was made to appear as the man responsible for having, as Goebbels wrote in his diary, 'completely spoiled the entire plan for the eastern campaign as it was designed with crystal clarity by the Führer.' The Führer could do no wrong. If the promise of victory by the autumn had proved illusory, it was because the High Command had failed.

Hitler did not stop to reflect that, in his new position, it would be less easy to find scapegoats in the future. For even when he had been most calculating in his exploitation of the image of the inspired

Führer, Hitler had never the picture he was upon success the element completely overshadowed what he had so long out by Providence and ordinary gifts. The image of possession of him until his own propaganda.

The success of his Russian counter-offensive and his confidence in the winter of 1942 he was listen to advice—or contrary to his own wish of the strength which himself—and it was the him down for in the self-criticism and cut the reality.

Now that he had taken upon himself, Hitler believably produce the knock him the previous year, a plans for the new campaign told him that the Army formation that six or seven were coming out of the thumped the table and the Russians were 'dead'.

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War-Lord, 1939-45

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Hitler's urging could
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Winter 1940-2
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67

initiative by the Allies. Henceforward Hitler was
forced to stand upon the defensive.

Hitler's very success in halting a German retreat
in the winter of 1941-2 now proved a fatal legacy.
His one idea was to stand firm at all costs. When
Rommel flew back to Germany at the end of Novem-
ber and told Hitler that Africa was lost, and the
only course was to get the Afrika Korps out to fight
in Italy, Hitler shouted at him that he was a defeat-
ist and his troops cowards. Despite his categorical
orders, however, neither Rommel nor anyone else
could halt the Allies' advance.

The Allied landings in French North Africa in
November took Hitler completely by surprise. He
immediately summoned Laval and Ciano for a meet-
ing at Munich. Hitler bluntly informed Laval that
the Germans would occupy Tunisia at once, together
with the rest of Unoccupied France. At last Mus-
solini had his way over France, but he was no longer
in a position to derive much satisfaction from it:
Italy was too obviously the Allies' next target after
North Africa.

After his long neglect of the Mediterranean Hitler
began to pour troops and supplies into Tunisia in
order at all costs to hold a bridgehead covering Tunis
and Bizerta. In something of a panic Mussolini urged
Hitler to come to terms with Russia, or at least
shorten his lines on the Eastern Front, so that the
greatest number of divisions could be moved to the
Mediterranean and the west. These suggestions were
ignored. Hitler was determined to hold Tunisia, but
he was equally determined not to give up anything
elsewhere.

Meanwhile the Russians methodically tightened
the net round the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad.
The formula which had proved successful the previ-
ous winter was monotonously repeated: Stand and
fight to the last man. Hitler refused to let Paulus
attempt to break the ring from the inside. No con-

served by holding the
tions, but Hitler's per-
s now engaged, and in
res of the 330,000 men
ing.

ry 1943 Paulus reported
ps, through cold, hunger,
r bearable, and that the
conditions was beyond
s unmoved. For answer
: 'Capitulation is impos-
do its historic duty at
an, in order to make pos-
the Eastern Front.' vol
o stoop to bribes: at the
ulus to the rank of Field-
the loyalty of the com-
d deliberately condemned
rd in military history,' he
rman Field-Marshal being

orse blow to Hitler's pres-
withdraw could ever have
January, the Russians an-
mpleted the capture or an-
r of the 6th Army and the
g that among the officers
Field-Marshal von Paulus

, the day after the Russian
his usual military confer-
his own responsibility for
Führer spared no thought
en to death or captivity. He
commanders who had ca-
ude and disloyalty, he de-
comprehension. In the suffer-

ings and defeat of a nation he saw only his own
betrayal by a people unworthy of their Führer.

Amongst the reasons for the German failure one
is of particular interest: Hitler's neglect of the po-
litical possibilities of weakening Russian resistance.
At an earlier stage—for instance, in preparing to
attack France—Hitler had shown a brilliant under-
standing of how war could be waged with other than
military weapons. But, although he repeatedly de-
scribed the war with Russia as an ideological conflict
and counted on the overthrow of the Soviet Govern-
ment by the Russian people, the harsh policy he
adopted in the east worked in the opposite direction.

There is evidence to show that when the German
armies entered the Ukraine and the Baltic States
they were looked upon as liberators. The treatment
the local population received from the civil adminis-
tration and the S.S. who moved in behind the armies
rapidly destroyed these illusions. Ignoring all that
might have been done to drive a wedge between the
people and the Soviet Government, especially in the
Ukraine, Hitler preferred to treat the inhabitants
of Eastern Europe indiscriminately as Slav Unter-
menschen, fit only for slave labour.

Goebbels was quick-witted enough to see the op-
portunities that were being lost. In September 1941
he dictated a lengthy memorandum on political plans
for handling the Russian peoples, and the next year
tried to get Hitler to issue a proclamation promising
the Russians greater freedom and some relief from
the oppressive exactions of the Soviet Government.
But Hitler's policy in Eastern Europe was no hasty
improvisation: it was the calculated expression of a
mind which could conceive of politics only in terms
of domination and could understand the exercise of
power solely in terms of the whip.

The first need was to exploit the occupied eastern

Jan 1941

Rominten, getting away from
summoning up strength for the

elled warning at the Swedes, whose
raid damage in grotesquely exagger-
d. "has been completely and literally
red immense damage, and entire dis-
n earthquake." By November 1, he
5,872 tons of bombs on London; but
only 31 tons on Berlin. Criticizing
dded, "If Sweden believes that the
nt than her own future, so be it. But
on if, one day, Germany draws the

al" he dropped a hint about Russia
n to Finland: "Your Finnish friends,"
future—even after Molotov's visit to
Marshal Mannerheim several weeks
would visit him again, in a few days'
welcomed the signs that the Finns had
former policies and move closer to the

East Prussian vacation. Once, he lan-
orders through to Milch to bomb Liv-
ver the moon, and to deliver "a heavy

u brought out to Rominten the plans
ructions for a Luftwaffe Air Corps to
ricate Mussolini from his own military
ce. Göring still loathed the Italians in
f I were a Frenchman," he had sneered
e war in June, "I should spit on the
!" But every Italian setback now just
d to approve the rescue plan.

al von Waldau in his diary. "A very
schall, most of it in the shooting brake
of the world-record stag, Matador."
tinued—against London, Birmingham,
stmas, however, Hitler, of all people,
killing match. The British, not to be
st Prussian retreat Göring was inspired
books to the children of airmen killed
thousand marks from his own bulging

account. By the end of that year Hitler had issued the formal directive for
Barbarossa, a possible attack on the Soviet Union. Göring's task would be
to force a "brisk conclusion" in the east.

As a military band serenaded the Reichsmarschall's hunting lodge, the
New Year arrived at Rominten. The first days were clear but cold at -20°
Celsius. Göring's red-leather pocket diary for 1941 has survived, with daily
notes neatly entered in blue or green crayon, tabulating his activities for each
moment of his day. Typical pages record him rising at eight-thirty, playing
twice for an hour with Edda, conferring with foresters, taking his latest guests
on sleigh rides, inspecting pedigree Trakehn horses, drinking coffee, and
supervising Fräulein Limberger's filing work before taking in a late movie
in his private cinema or playing a hand of bridge. Sometimes he went skiing
through the forests with Paula or hunted wild boar with Olga. It was left to
his physician, Dr. von Ondarza, to brief him on the war—the night raids
against the British Isles and the harassing attacks by General Geissler's X
Air Corps against the British naval base of Malta.

He savored the approach of his birthday like a small boy, reviewing
the arrangements with Gömnert two days beforehand but still managing
to express surprise at all the gifts. The Italian ambassador, the smirking
and obsequious Dino Alfieri, displayed to him Mussolini's own gift—the
early fifteenth-century altar from Sterzing in the South Tyrol. Built by the
Swabian master Hans Multscher, it consisted of eight great paintings and
wood carvings.

The birthday itself passed almost flawlessly. The Hermann Göring Regi-
ment paraded in drifting snow. A luncheon was provided by Horcher's,
Göring's favorite gourmet restaurant. Afterward, the Prussian State Theater
staged the comedy *Cherries for Rome* in the Air Ministry's largest hall. One
mystery did, however, mar the day. The diamond-studded cigarette box that
Emmy had given him vanished from the gift-laden tables. "Six P.M.," Göring
entered grimly in his diary. "Investigation into the theft of Emmy's present."
Arrayed in a red silk dressing gown and furry slippers, he elbowed through
the piles of packages, his face trancelike, looking for the missing trinket.
He changed into a pure white uniform for dinner, but his smooth, glossy
complexion was flushed with anger at the theft, and when Emmy announced
that she had telephoned a clairvoyant friend, a doctor in Kassel—"He says
it's still in the building!"—Göring just harrumphed.

His diary outlined the events of the next day, January 13, 1941. At 12:30
P.M., "Conference with Kömer, Neumann, and Backe on nutrition." (Backe's
diary shows that he warned of a food crisis looming in Europe.) 1:30 P.M.,
"Detective finds stolen cigarette case!" (A Horcher waiter had evidently
stuffed it down a sofa.) "2:00 P.M., lunch with guests. 3:00 P.M., packed
my birthday presents. 3:30 P.M., rested in bed." At five o'clock his air-force
advisers Jeschonnek, Milch, and Bodenschatz came to "report on conference
with the Führer, operational matters," joined an hour later by General Udet.

Milch summed up this secret conference in one word in his own notebook: "Ost" [East]. And Jeschonnek informed his staff at La Boissière that Hitler had resolved to "sever the head of the danger menacing us in the east."

Göring still hankered after peace with Britain. On January 14, the Swedish Count Bonde, who had visited Lord Halifax quite recently, was brought in. Göring was crestfallen to learn that Bonde had brought no particular message from the British. "We have offered Britain peace twice," said Göring wistfully. "If I send any message now, they will take it as a sign of weakness." He resumed his art pursuits. The diary glimpses him at Carinhall on the eighteenth, haggling with his art agents Miedl and Hofer. He swam and sauna'd often, but his health had worsened perceptibly, and after addressing air-force officers on the nineteenth he suffered a midnight heart attack. Clearly it was not his first, since his diary treats it almost routinely. Professor Siebert took an electrocardiogram, and on the twenty-second Göring was fit enough to meet Kesselring, Jeschonnek, and other generals again.

The coming war with Russia overshadowed all else. His differences with Hitler over forward strategy became more marked as the shaping of *Barbarossa* now began. For some weeks Göring found that he was getting phone calls discouraging him from attending Hitler's daily war conference, the *Führerlage*. "I don't know what's up," Emmy heard her husband remark. "The Führer stops me going over. Something's going on." The diary confirms this. Between November 14 and mid-March he met Hitler only four times, and they telephoned each other only rarely—e.g., on January 16, when he reported that X Air Corps had sunk the British cruisers *Southampton* and *York* and the aircraft carrier *Illustrious*.

General Kurt Student, the Parachute Division's commander, came out to Carinhall with Jeschonnek on January 24 and stayed aboard Göring's train when it left for Berchtesgaden. As they talked that evening, Student found the Reichsmarschall bitterly opposed to *Barbarossa*. Arriving at Berchtesgaden, Göring tackled Hitler at midday, lunched with him, and stayed with him alone until 8:00 P.M. They were probably arguing, because General Student would recall four years later that Hitler left afterward "sunk deep in thought." According to Student, Göring was already thinking he had succeeded—"Thank God, no war with Russia!"—when Hitler phoned two days later: "Göring," he said, "I have changed my mind. We shall attack in the east."

By that time Hermann Göring was back in Berlin, immersed in three days of Cabinet-level conferences on raw materials and the coming campaign in the Balkans. On January 28, 1941, he was again summoned to the Führer's presence, this time in the Reich Chancellery. On the following day the Reichsmarschall revealed in a three-hour conference with his arms experts and economics advisers, according to Körner's later testimony, that war with Russia was definite. He asked each of those seated around the table for his

view. Fritz Todt, Friedrich Krauch, and Fritz Fromm unthinkable," citing precise vexed Göring. The expert himself, pointed out pessimism Germany's chronic grain shortage Thomas to set up a

Visibly agitated, he took that Hitler had decided to in Gastein to take the cure for the only political conversation marschall. How unlike Carl you for weeks?" she asked. very political animal," he said. He now told her that Hitler

Disconsolate at his failure, 30, 1941—the party's anniversary member staff. He parked his Hague and Amsterdam with Jew and Gentile as he traded. Arriving back at La Boissière first day of February amid snare from Milch but stayed in bed Alfred Rosenberg and his haul an art raid on Paris that would days, from February 4 to February he pursued the barely legal

His thieving friend General Hanesse had housed his office du Faubourg Saint-Honoré; the former residence of the Roth: Luftwaffe hostel complete with and cutlery. Göring liked that fine tapestries and carpets him

Here in Paris, Göring and Günther Prien, who had sunk around fine jewelers like Peru; word shopping in his diary, a shows that he was visited after Army's "art-protection officer, bullying official whose high-ranking, that of a Feldführer in R

* after the praise comes more criticism
Hitler, who knows nothing about
air war, is criticizing an airman who

→ knows his
modern art

Jan 1941

in one word in his own notebook: his staff at La Boissière that Hitler longer menacing us in the east."

Britain. On January 14, the Swedish ifax quite recently, was brought in. e had brought no particular message in peace twice," said Göring wistfully take it as a sign of weakness." glimpses him at Carinhall on the s Miedl and Hofer. He swam and ed perceptibly, and after addressing ured a midnight heart attack. Clearly t almost routinely. Professor Siebert venty-second Göring was fit enough r generals again.

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view. Fritz Todt, Friedrich Syrup, Erich Neumann, Georg Thomas, Carl Krauch, and Fritz Fromm all declared that such a war was "economically unthinkable," citing precisely the same raw-material considerations that had vexed Göring. The exception was Herbert Backe. Backe, born in Russia himself, pointed out pensively that the conquest of the Ukraine would solve Germany's chronic grain shortages. Unconvinced, unhappy too, Göring directed Thomas to set up a special economic unit to study the problem.

Visibly agitated, he took Emmy for a walk afterward and confided to her that Hitler had decided to invade Russia. Emmy was about to leave for Bad Gastein to take the cure for her rheumatism. This, Emmy later testified, was the only political conversation that she ever had with her husband the Reichsmarschall. How unlike Carin she was! "Is that why the Führer wouldn't see you for weeks?" she asked. Göring laughed out loud. "You may not be a very political animal," he said, "but you've got your head screwed on." He now told her that Hitler had confirmed it himself. "I refused to see you, Göring, because I knew you would do all you could to talk me out of it."

Disconsolate at his failure, the Reichsmarschall left for Holland on January 30, 1941—the party's anniversary—taking his sisters and a one-hundred member staff. He parked his train and strolled around the art dealers at The Hague and Amsterdam with Miedl and Hofer, dealing indiscriminately with Jew and Gentile as he traded guilders and Reichsmarks for gilt and canvas. Arriving back at La Boissière, the air staff's forward headquarters, on the first day of February amid snow and slush, he resumed operational command from Milch but stayed in bed with a headache until, brightening, he recalled Alfred Rosenberg and his haul of "ownerless" Jewish treasures. He executed an art raid on Paris that would exceed anything else to date, last for three days, from February 4 to February 6, and demonstrate his ruthlessness as he pursued the barely legal enrichment of his art hoard.

His thieving friend General Hanesse collected him from the Gare du Nord. Hanesse had housed his offices in the gallery of Roger & Gallet, at 62 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré; this was just down the street from the opulent former residence of the Rothschilds, which Hanesse had converted into a Luftwaffe hostel complete with priceless Persian carpets and crested plates and cutlery. Göring liked that: He had developed something of a taste for fine tapestries and carpets himself.

Here in Paris, Göring and Hanesse lunched with Submarine Commander Günther Prien, who had sunk the British battleship *Royal Oak*, then strolled around fine jewelers like Perugia, Magnet, and Hermès. He jotted the one word *shopping* in his diary, and that said it all. The same little notebook shows that he was visited after tea by Dr. Hermann Bunjes, the German Army's "art-protection officer," and Colonel Kurt von Behr, an unpleasant, bullying official whose high-ranking Red Cross uniform concealed his true rank, that of a *Feldführer* in Rosenberg's task force in Paris.

→ knows very little about
modern German & warflowers

Spring 1941

8 BRITAIN BARBAROSSA

Throughout the spring of 1941 Hitler's planned conquest of eastern territories cast its nightmarish shadow over every ministerial corridor in Berlin could be reached with ponderous tread, and none dared to talk him and his eager army out of Hermann Göring's contentment as he unpacked the crates of artworks and tried to scout the treasure-filled bazaars of the Low Countries, for anything that might contradict Hitler's *Barbarossa* plan, Göring was operating with merciless precision. His wife and infant daughter were safe here the stags and wild boar awaited him at the quaintly clad Reich master

In fact, as the actual day approached, despair at Hitler's deliberate opening could leak to the British both the fact

and the actual date of *Barbarossa*—an extraordinary act bordering on treason, of which Hitler was surely not aware.

The German Army high command backed Hitler solidly in his historic intent, and Göring could not count on the support of Grand Admiral Raeder, either. Relations with the navy's commander in chief were strained. Raeder's warships were having to operate virtually without air reconnaissance. Moreover, when Raeder now complained to Hitler on February 4—as Göring vacationed in Paris—that the British bombers had begun raiding the North German coast with impunity, Hitler agreed that the navy should take over control of the Luftwaffe's KG40, one of Göring's proudest squadrons. Göring exploded with fury and summoned the nearest admiral, U-boat Commander Karl Dönitz, from his Paris headquarters to La Boissière. Over coffee he heaped upon the admiral remarks that Dönitz described in his report as "distinctly unfriendly." "You can be sure of one thing," Göring snapped. "As long as I live, or until I resign, your Grand Admiral Raeder will never get a fleet air arm." Pointing out that he, Göring, was "the second man in the state," he threatened that even if Dönitz should somehow get his hands on KG40 he would not be likely to find replacements for its long-range planes. "I need FW 200's too," he shouted. "And it'll serve you right!"

After leaving France on February 9, 1941 Göring found that he still needed to soothe his tattered nerves by cruising around more art galleries for a couple of days, those at The Hague and Amsterdam. With his sisters and the latest loot from the Jeu de Paume loaded safely aboard, his train took him back to Berlin. Here, on February 11, he made one of his last attempts to talk Hitler out of attacking Russia, asking Schnurre, the German diplomat handling the renewal of the Soviet trade agreement, to put to him the serious economic disadvantages of fighting Nazi Germany's principal supplier of both grain and petroleum.

Without waiting for the result, Göring left for East Prussia and spent the next days hunting stags, stalking elk, and sleigh-riding.

In the second half of February 1941 he began to accept *Barbarossa* as a necessary evil. Riding his train south to Bavaria on February 18, he thoughtfully discussed Germany's alternative petroleum supplies with a Dr. Fischer, his principal expert on Romanian oil. Soon after, Göring began actually to advocate the benefits of capturing the Soviet oil fields. His diary shows that on February 19 he lunched at Hitler's Berghof and spent the next six hours in private conclave with Hitler and General Jeschonnek, the chief of air staff. Hitler robustly stated that if anybody else talked to him about the economic drawbacks of *Barbarossa*, he was going to block his ears. "If Russia is on the point of attacking Germany," he reasoned with the Reichsmarschall, "then economics don't come into it."

Still uncomfortable, Göring reminded him of Napoleon's defeat in Russia.

Hitler would not heed him, and Göring, characteristically, saw no choice but to fall into line. When the Reich minister of finance, Count Schwerin von Krosigk, wrote to him pleading against *Barbarossa*, Göring instructed Paul Körner to reply orally that the planned campaign was preventive, and hence necessary. On February 22, the Reichsmarschall wrote two eloquent, perhaps even fatalistic, words in his diary. "East: deadlines."

The change in his posture was apparent when he discussed the long-term economic effects of *Barbarossa* with General Thomas of the OKW on the twenty-sixth. He agreed that there was little point in occupying just the Ukraine. "At all costs," said Göring, "we must get the petroleum fields around Baku too."

He shares the Führer's opinion [noted Thomas immediately afterward] that when the German troops march into Russia the whole Bolshevik state will collapse and that in consequence we have no cause to anticipate the large-scale destruction of supplies or demolition of railroads that I fear.

"What matters most," said Göring, "is to finish off the Bolshevik leaders, fast, first, and foremost."

Visiting Vienna on March 5, he casually asked the visiting right-wing dictator of Romania, General Ion Antonescu, whether his country could increase its petroleum output—"Since our other oil supplier [Russia] might one day drop out." He asked equally casually, "How many of your Romanians live on Russian soil?" and when Antonescu told him, the Reichsmarschall made a silent scooping gesture with one hand.

To dupe the British into believing they were next on his menu, Hitler sent the gaudy Luftwaffe commander back to the west for two weeks later that month. Göring bore this banishment with fortitude, happily hobnobbing with his shady art-dealer acquaintances in The Hague and Amsterdam—where Nathan Katz, the Jew who had sold him three paintings, including Van Dyck's "Family Portrait" (for eighty thousand dollars), was now wangling exit visas to Switzerland—and in Paris, where he made further raids on the Jeu de Paume on the eleventh and twelfth.

Göring no longer tried to talk Hitler out of *Barbarossa*. On March 19, 1941, as his train had returned from The Hague to Berlin, General Thomas had come aboard to brief him on the organization for *Barbarossa* and on the strategic stockpiling of fuel and rubber. Six days later Göring talked for an hour with Birger Dahlerus and, according to the Swede's wife, told him for the first time of the coming campaign in Russia. When Field Marshal Milch came out to lunch at Carinhall the next day, spluttering protests that *Barbarossa* was bound to drag on into the coming winter, Göring calmed him down. "Russia," he said, "will collapse like a house of cards." Hitler

Feb 1941

WARNING BRITAIN

himself had assured him so—"The rest of us can only fall in."

When the new Japanese ambassador courtesy visit that day, Göring did too. "First we shall defeat Britain by deception strategy," "and next the later by Hitler for the Japanese f Goebbels on the awesome event in on Greece" (due at the end of the of assistance to Mussolini).

The big project [noted Goebbels] is coming later: ag camouflaged and only a har begin with extensive troop n suspicion to all sorts of plac is in preparation. . . .

Not entirely capable of suppressing that the campaign had "parallels mentally troubled the Reichsmarschall."

Hitler's plan to aid Mussolini in a pro-British coup in Yugoslavia tête-à-tête with Dahlerus at midday from Hitler to attend, along with chief, a briefing at the Reich Chancellery, Führer briefing (Yugoslavia) mood, because he had made one o that he had resolved to "smash Y as invading Greece. Equipped with army swiftly pulled together the a would require. After a late lunch Udet, Waldau, Schmid, and Quart Waldau noted in his own diary: 'the Reichsmarschall at the Führer' has created a new situation in the a military operation as rapidly as

Göring reported back to the Führer would be to destroy the Yugoslavs flattening Belgrade itself by saturation night switching air-force squadrons bomber wing would move to Wismar dive bombers of Stuka 77, the fight

* The metaphysical belief in a God

and Göring, characteristically, saw no choice but to be Reich minister of finance, Count Schwerin von Krosigk, leading against *Barbarossa*, Göring instructed that the planned campaign was preventive, and on March 22, the Reichsmarschall wrote two eloquent letters in his diary. "East: deadlines." It was apparent when he discussed the long-term strategy with General Thomas of the OKW on the 23rd that there was little point in occupying just the Balkans. Göring, "we must get the petroleum fields

in our opinion [noted Thomas immediately after the German troops march into Russia the whole campaign] and that in consequence we have no large-scale destruction of supplies or demoralization to fear.

Göring, "is to finish off the Bolshevik leaders,

On March 25, he casually asked the visiting right-wing Romanian leader Ion Antonescu, whether his country could not supply oil. "Since our other oil supplier [Russia] might be equally casually, "How many of your Romanian troops?" and when Antonescu told him, the Reichsmarschall gestured with one hand.

Believing they were next on his menu, Hitler sent Göring back to the west for two weeks later that he returned with fortitude, happily hobnobbing with the Dutch and the French in The Hague and Amsterdam—where he sold him three paintings, including Van Dyck's "The Descent from the Cross" (thousand dollars), was now wangling exit visas for his family, where he made further raids on the Jeu de Paquet.

He talked Hitler out of *Barbarossa*. On March 19, he flew from The Hague to Berlin, General Thomas was on the organization for *Barbarossa* and on the 20th he was in the rubber. Six days later Göring talked for an hour with the Swede's wife, told him for his campaign in Russia. When Field Marshal Milch called him the next day, spluttering protests that *Barbarossa* was in the coming winter, Göring calmed him by saying "it will collapse like a house of cards." Hitler

March 1941

himself had assured him so—"The Führer is a unique leader. a gift of God. The rest of us can only fall in behind."

When the new Japanese ambassador, General Hiroshi Oshima, paid a courtesy visit that day, Göring dropped a broad hint to him about *Barbarossa* too. "First we shall defeat Britain," he boasted, following the official deception strategy, "and next the Soviets." Over a banquet thrown two days later by Hitler for the Japanese foreign minister, Göring talked briefly with Goebbels on the awesome event that was to follow the "long-prepared assault on Greece" (due at the end of the first week in April, as an urgent measure of assistance to Mussolini).

The big project [noted Goebbels, after discussing *Barbarossa* with Göring] is coming later: against "R." It is being very carefully camouflaged and only a handful of people know about it. It will begin with extensive troop movements to the west. We shall divert suspicion to all sorts of places. . . . A mock invasion of England is in preparation. . . .

Not entirely capable of suppressing his own apprehensions, Goebbels noted that the campaign had "parallels with Napoleon," and that these had momentarily troubled the Reichsmarschall too.

Hitler's plan to aid Mussolini in Greece was dramatically complicated by a pro-British coup in Yugoslavia on March 27. He was enjoying a farewell tête-à-tête with Dahlerus at midday when he received the sudden summons from Hitler to attend, along with Ribbentrop and the other commanders in chief, a briefing at the Reich Chancellery. Göring noted merely, "1:00-3:00 P.M., Führer briefing (Yugoslavia)." Hitler was in an ominously buoyant mood, because he had made one of his sudden snap decisions: He announced that he had resolved to "smash Yugoslavia" immediately, at the same time as invading Greece. Equipped with Hitler's simple order, the air force and army swiftly pulled together the additional forces that a Yugoslav campaign would require. After a late lunch, Göring had a two-hour conference with Udet, Waldau, Schmid, and Quartermaster General von Seidel. General von Waldau noted in his own diary: "In the afternoon I am summoned to see the Reichsmarschall at the Führer's official residence. The Yugoslav putsch has created a new situation in the Balkans. The decision is made to mount a military operation as rapidly as possible.

Göring reported back to the Führer at 7:30 P.M. The Luftwaffe's task would be to destroy the Yugoslav and Greek ground organization, after flattening Belgrade itself by saturation bombing. Waldau worked far into the night switching air-force squadrons from the west to the southeast: the KG51 bomber wing would move to Wiener-Neustadt; the bombers of KG2, the dive bombers of Stuka 77, the fighters of JG54 would leapfrog across Europe

* The metaphysics of Goering's belief in a God. Use Grimm.

to new bases in the same region. "What is politically absolutely essential," commented Walldau after conferring with Göring, "is for the punch to be hurled at Yugoslavia with merciless force and for the military smash (*Zerschlagung*) to follow like lightning." Göring's diary shows him galvanized into action over the next days, recording appointments with Austrian-born General Alexander Löhr (commanding Luftflotte 4, Vienna), with Franz Neuhausen, who was handling the economic exploitation of the Balkans, and with a kaleidoscopic cast of other generals, ambassadors, art agents, goldsmiths, air-force lawyers, sculptors, and test pilots (one of whom, Hanna Reitsch, he accompanied to receive her Iron Cross from Hitler on March 28). The name of Professor Siebert again figures in the diary, because Göring's cardiovascular system was still causing alarm.

On March 30, three days after the Belgrade coup, Göring attended a three-hour secret speech by Hitler to his generals in the Chancellery's paneled Cabinet Room. Trying to explain why Britain was stubbornly fighting on, Hitler accused "the warmonger Winston Churchill and the Jews around him," and he blamed the Italians and their "accursed military incompetence." But, he argued, Germany must defeat the Soviet Union first, and he mentioned particularly the growing strength of the Russian Air Force. According to the notes taken by the chief of general staff, Franz Halder, Hitler expressed approval during this speech of their plan to liquidate the Soviet political commissars found among Russian prisoners. Hitler explained to his high-ranking secret audience that *Barbarossa* would see two conflicting ideologies locked in mortal combat—"We must abandon the notion of soldierly camaraderie. The Communist," he said, "has not an ounce of comradeship in him." He directed, "Communists and GPU [Soviet secret police] men are criminals and are to be dealt with as such."

None of this gave Hermann Göring any sleepless nights. Innocent of any feelings of guilt, he joined Emmy briefly at Bad Gastein, then took his train on to Austria on April 4. He would remain there languidly directing air-force operations from a tourist hotel on the Semmering until the Balkan campaign ended three weeks later. It opened with a vicious VIII Air Corps raid by three hundred bombers on Belgrade at 7:20 A.M. on the sixth (the Yugoslavs claimed that the raid left seventeen thousand dead). Hitler had, however, forbidden Göring to bomb Athens, and during the remaining fighting there was little for Göring's squadrons to do other than harry the transport ships that eventually evacuated the British expeditionary force.

On the Semmering he walked and swam, trying to strengthen his heart, but the mountain air was heavy with the sleet and drizzle of early spring. For company he took Pili Körner and Milch, or Udet and Jeschonnek, but these Luftwaffe generals were vain and immiscible. Jeschonnek, his chief of air staff, was sensitive, withdrawn, and unimaginative—the very opposite of the flamboyant and corrupt Reichsmarschall. Every two or three days Göring drove over to Hitler's command train, which was halted between two

March 1941

WARNING BRITAIN

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Göring dismissed Schwenke's repensive when told, and afterward clinched the decision for him.

At the beginning of May 1941, Göring traveled to Paris, taking his Establishing a pretext for the trip, Göring "Major conference on full-moon attack Luftflotte," with "many participants night of May 10–11.)

His diary, as he arrived in Paris, with acquisitive zeal:

May 1, 1941, Paris.

8:00, rose; 9:00, newspapers.

10:20 arrive at Paris Gare de l'Est

11:00 briefing by Hanesse and [Drees]

11:15 [art dealer] Bernheim and

12:00 [Feldführer] von Behr.

Behr, chief of Rosenberg's Paris task important document:

THE REICHSMARSCHALL OF THE GREATER GERMAN REICH

The struggle against Jews, Free logical and hostile forces allied with National Socialism during this war I therefore welcome Reichsleiter

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tunnels at Mönnichkirchen. He reported that his bombers had again raided Coventry, Glasgow, Bristol, and Liverpool. On April 9, the British retaliated against Berlin. Göring's State Opera was gutted. The British newspapers boasted that three thousand Berliners had died in the fires (the true figure was eleven). Göring retaliated with a violent attack on London a week later.

A few days after the London raid an air-force technical mission returned from Moscow. The air-force experts brought disturbing news of the Soviet Union's industrial mobilization. They had been allowed to tour half a dozen huge factories manufacturing equipment from ball bearings and special alloys to warplanes and aero-engines. Over dinner on the eighth, Soviet aircraft designer Mikoyan had blustered, "You have now seen the mighty technology of this Soviet nation. We shall bravely shatter any aggression, no matter where it comes from!" Colonel Dietrich Schwenke, head of the Luftwaffe mission, warned Göring that just one aircraft engine plant at Kuibyshev was bigger than all of the six biggest German factories together.

Göring dismissed Schwenke's report as defeatist. But Hitler became very pensive when told, and afterward mentioned Schwenke's report as having clinched the decision for him.

At the beginning of May 1941, with the Balkan campaign all but over, Göring traveled to Paris, taking his art curator Walter Hofer with him. Establishing a pretext for the trip, Göring entered in his diary for the second, "Major conference on full-moon attack [on London] by Second and Third Luftflotte," with "many participants." (The attack would take place on the night of May 10–11.)

His diary, as he arrived in Paris, shows that nothing had diminished his acquisitive zeal:

May 1, 1941, Paris.

8:00, rose; 9:00, newspapers.

10:20 arrive at Paris Gare de l'Est station.

11:00 briefing by Hanesse and [the general's adjutant, Major] Drees

11:15 [art dealer] Bernheim and Hofer

12:00 [Feldführer] von Behr.

Spring sunshine.

Behr, chief of Rosenberg's Paris task force, persuaded him to sign this important document:

THE REICHSMARSCHALL OF
THE GREATER GERMAN REICH

Headquarters, May 1, 1941

The struggle against Jews, Freemasons, and the diverse ideological and hostile forces allied with them is an urgent duty for National Socialism during this war.

I therefore welcome Reichsleiter Rosenberg's decision to set

up task forces in all occupied territories with the mission of securing all research material and cultural assets of the above-designated groups and transporting them to Germany.

The Göring document ordered all party, government, and military agencies to afford Feldführer von Behr "every conceivable support and assistance." He resumed his diary:

12:15 P.M., Angerer (long talk!)
 1:45 Staffelt [head of Currency Protection Unit]
 2:00 war briefing by [chief adjutant Major von] Brauchitsch
 2:30 lunch at Crémallière
 3:45 Bernheim at Grand Hotel
 4:15 Jeu de Paume (paintings)
 5:30 Napoleon's crypt at Invalides Cathedral
 6:00 return to Palais and read
 7:30 report by [Hitler's air-force adjutant Major Nicolaus] von Below
 9:25 situation [conference with] chief of air staff
 10:00 dinner with guests at Maxim's, back at 11:00.

The next two days passed in the same sort of whirl—conferences with fighter aces Werner Mölders and Adolf Galland, sumptuous meals at Maxim's, erotic evenings at the Bal Tabarin, "shopping for furniture for Veldenstein," another finger-licking trip to the Jeu de Paume, and then back to his train—but not before he had negotiated with Bernheim the purchase of the priceless "Bagatelle Ceiling." ("The Russians have it," he would say sardonically when asked by the Americans what had happened to this fabulous painted ceiling in 1945.)

He had to be back in Berlin for Hitler's grandiloquent, triumphant, sarcastic speech to the Reichstag on the Balkan campaign. His train pulled in at 4:00 P.M. on May 4, he spoke with Hitler privately a few minutes later, and took his seat on the dais behind the Führer and his deputy, Rudolf Hess, at six. Nothing in the latter's demeanor betrayed that he was planning a spectacular adventure a few days later. The next day Göring inspected architect Albert Speer's latest dazzling models for the reconstruction of Berlin—an immense monument to Hitler's thousand-year Reich, with triumphal arch, broad ceremonial boulevards, and a great domed assembly hall. "I have the same admiration for your architectural ability," he flattered the young Nazi architect, "as I have for the Führer's political and military talents!"

His heart still molesting him, he went on brief leave to Bad Gastein, rejoining Emmy, before returning on May 9 to Veldenstein Castle in Franconia, to discuss plans for its interior renovation.

Hermann Göring had again left May 10, 1941, it flew the mo attack so far, causing immense ment Building. On Sunday Dr. castle. The Reichsmarschall had the telephone rang—a comman Hitler on the Obersalzberg. G. "The Führer wants to see you!" with Hitler in Munich on Frid voice replaced the general's: "G

Panic replaced puzzlement. G P.M. by the time it reached M on to the Berghof. There he s hovering around grinning unplea bntrop. Walther Hewel, Ribb wrote in his diary: "Göring get Bodenschatz told me he's also v the hall between F., foreign min of speculation."

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Hermann Göring had again left Milch in charge of the air force. On Saturday May 10, 1941, it flew the moonlight attack on London—its most severe attack so far, causing immense damage to the city and wrecking the Parli-
ament Building. On Sunday Dr. von Oндarza brought the first reports to the
castle. The Reichsmarschall had just settled down for lunch after that when
the telephone rang—a command-flash call (*Führungs-Blitz-Gespräch*) from
Hitler on the Obersalzberg. Göring recognized Bodenschatz's voice first:
"The Führer wants to see you!" Since Göring had just spent two hours alone
with Hitler in Munich on Friday, he involuntarily groaned. Hitler's gruff
voice replaced the general's: "Göring! You are to come down here. *At once!*"

Panic replaced puzzlement. Göring fled to his special train, but it was 7:00
P.M. by the time it reached Munich, and it took two more hours to drive
on to the Berghof. There he saw Martin Bormann, Hess's chief of staff,
hovering around grinning unpleasantly, and a white-faced Joachim von Rib-
bentrop. Walther Hewel, Ribbentrop's ambassador on the Führer's staff,
wrote in his diary: "Göring gets here after supper at nine P.M. From what
Bodenschatz told me he's also very agitated. Long discussion downstairs in
the hall between F., foreign minister, Göring, Bormann. Very heated, a lot
of speculation."

Hitler thrust several pages of paper into Göring's hands. "Reichsminister
Hess has flown to England!" he burst out. "He left this letter." In the
document Hess declared himself willing to risk his life to make peace with
Britain and end the bloodshed. Göring was contemptuous. He dismissed Hess
as insane. ("Do you think," he would ask rhetorically in October 1945,
"Hitler would really have sent the third man in the Reich on such a lone
mission to Britain without the slightest preparation? . . . If he really wanted
to deal with the British, there were reliable semidiplomatic channels through
neutral countries. My own connections with Britain were such that I could
have arranged it within forty-eight hours.")

The next day, Monday, May 12, Göring returned with General Udet to
discuss with Hitler the vital question whether Hess could have handled the
difficult Messerschmitt 110 aircraft alone and landed in Scotland. Might he
not have disappeared silently into the North Sea? Ribbentrop, however, was
terrified that Britain might announce Hess's arrival at any moment—and that
might blow the already strained Axis alliance wide open. All that afternoon
Hitler and Göring debated this dilemma.

"A very disturbed day," wrote Hewel. "Investigations into Hess's flight
. . . Neither Göring nor Udet believes Hess capable of pulling off the difficult
flight to Glasgow. . . . But the Führer thinks Hess has the skill. We make
announcement at eight P.M."

Soon after Göring returned to his train, down at Berchtesgaden, the BBC
broadcast from London that Rudolf Hess had landed in Scotland. At 9:00
P.M. Göring telephoned Hitler with the news. His own investigations began.

Bodenschatz found out that Hess had made complex, level-headed flight plans, including the use of a blind-navigation radio beam. Bodenschatz was not surprised by the deputy Führer's flight. "Hess," he would say in captivity, "was the exception. He had *nothing*—no castles, just a simple apartment. He could bring himself to part with his possessions."

The next morning (May 13) Göring tackled Professor Messerschmitt. "I see that anybody can fly at your airfield, despite the regulations," he thundered at the aircraft designer.

"Hess," retorted the aircraft designer, "was not just anybody. He was one of the most important ministers."

"Well, you knew Hess was crazy!"

From all over the Reich the gauleiters and ministers were assembling at the Berghof that afternoon to hear Hitler's report on the background to the Hess affair. Göring drove up there at three-thirty and spent an hour alone with Hitler first, discussing who would succeed Hess as "party minister." There was no talk of reviving the hollow title of deputy Führer. The Reichsmarschall spoke bluntly against promoting Martin Bormann to the job. Hitler assured him he was thinking of Bormann more in terms of becoming party treasurer.

"You're way out if you think Bormann will be satisfied with that," retorted Göring.

"Bormann's ambitions," said Hitler, "are a matter of indifference to me."

Hitler went down into the hall followed by a grim-faced Göring, and directed Bormann to read out the letters that Hess had left behind. The sixty or seventy Nazi leaders clustered round in a silent semicircle. Hans Frank had not seen Hitler so grief-stricken since the suicide of his niece Geli, ten years before. It was obvious that Hess's venture had taken him by surprise.

Pausing only briefly at the showrooms of United Handicrafts (Vereinigte Werkstätten) in Munich to select more furniture for his castle, Göring resumed his interrupted vacation at Veldenstein. A few days later his morning newspaper told him that Hitler had opted for Bormann after all, appointing him "director of the party chancellery." This hundredfold increase in the powers and status of Hess's ruthless red-neck chief of staff was a real setback for Göring. He had never got on well with Bormann. "Bormann," he would subsequently lament, "was a glutton for hard work and thus he consolidated his position . . . He matched his daily routine to the Führer's. He was always on hand when the Führer needed him." Bormann was far more radical in his anti-clerical and anti-Jewish campaign than Göring. From now on, a chance lunchtime remark by Hitler would be converted instantly by Bormann into a written Führer decree. Clean-living and not susceptible to bribery, he loathed the Reichsmarschall and the style of life that he led. As the troubles of the air force began to multiply, Bormann undertook a personal vendetta against its commander that Göring would reciprocate beyond the grave.

"Do you think Bormann is dead?" he would be asked in October 1945.

May 1941

"If I had any say in it," he hope he's frying in hell."

In the air force his own prestige officers showed by their private r said one officer in June 1941, "money in Germany. But there's really earns it!" They admired on the West Wall," said one Mes "Some officers with only two, Cross Second Class while rookies paid them a visit . . . he had : dished them out to these men him have a temper! Driving off, his men he tipped the generals out :

Air-force morale was high, and like the parachute assault on Cr having planned this coup, but it s had refused to agree whether th force or army control, which l division for the assault. What wa insecure machine ciphers the Bri zones of the paratroops, and fo wave. "We had the impression," think I'm mistaken, that the Briti which we were coming, because this, the air force never investig been broken. There is indirect ev were insecure, because in June l his bomber forces target priorities: which was, in fact, just part of th prior to *Barbarossa*. On June 8, Field Marshal Hugo Sperrle's dv part of the same grand deception ring's Luftflotte 2, with twenty-i transferred to the eastern front.

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"If I had any say in it," he spat out, tossing both hands in the air, "I
hope he's frying in hell."

In the air force his own prestige was still high. Even in enemy hands his
officers showed by their private remarks that they admired him. "Hermann,"
said one officer in June 1941, "is definitely the man who rakes in the most
money in Germany. But there's not a man who begrudges it, because he
really earns it!" They admired his even-handedness. "There was this unit
on the West Wall," said one Messerschmitt 109F pilot shot down over Malta.
"Some officers with only two sorties to their name already had the Iron
Cross Second Class while rookies with ten sorties had nothing. Then Hermann
paid them a visit . . . he had some Iron Crosses brought in at once and
dished them out to these men himself. The CO was sacked—boy did Hermann
have a temper! Driving off, his car got stuck in the mud. In front of all the
men he tipped the generals out and made them push it free."

Air-force morale was high, and this carried it through its bloodier episodes,
like the parachute assault on Crete on May 20. Göring prided himself on
having planned this coup, but it stood under an ill omen. He and Brauchitsch
had refused to agree whether the airborne division should come under air-
force or army control, which left only General Student's one parachute
division for the assault. What was far worse was that through the Luftwaffe's
insecure machine ciphers the British learned the precise hour and dropping
zones of the paratroops, and four thousand were killed in the first assault
wave. "We had the impression," said General Rudolf Meister, "and I don't
think I'm mistaken, that the British knew the exact time and the morning on
which we were coming, because full preparations had been made." Despite
this, the air force never investigated the possibility that their ciphers had
been broken. There is indirect evidence that Göring knew that *some* ciphers
were insecure, because in June British code-breakers heard him issuing to
his bomber forces target priorities for a "new blitz" against British cities—
which was, in fact, just part of the high command's strategic deception plan
prior to *Barbarossa*. On June 8, Göring phoned Milch to order him to tour
Field Marshal Hugo Sperrle's dwindling Luftflotte 3 in the west; this was
part of the same grand deception, designed to conceal the fact that Kessel-
ring's Luftflotte 2, with twenty-five hundred warplanes, had already been
transferred to the eastern front.

During May 1941 Göring had committed the air force to one other minor
theater of war. After an Arab rebellion against the British forces in oil-rich
Iraq, he had despatched a small force of Messerschmitt planes under General
Felmy to aid the rebels. But it was too little and too late, as Göring explained
to Hitler and Foreign Minister Ribbentrop on the last day of May. "They
don't know anything about aviation out there, and airlifting fuel would have
been pointless and costly."

Thus he glossed over his own inadequacies while emphasizing those of

his colleagues. Unfeeling and scheming to maintain position, Göring used the sinking of Germany's newest battleship, *Bismarck*, four days before, with the loss of twenty-three hundred sailors, to generate bad feeling against Admiral Raeder. His own prestige was high. On May 31, he was able to deliver a victory report on Crete to Hitler (although the Luftwaffe had lost 150 Junkers 52 transport planes in the assault).

Air force is overextended [wrote Hewel after Göring's visit to the Berghof]. Had no respite since this war began. Based on Crete, a determined struggle will now begin against the British Fleet and Tobruk [the main obstacle to Rommel's advance across Libya] . . . Göring and F. use harsh language about *Bismarck* and the navy.

By now they had received secret reports of a speech that Stalin had delivered at a Kremlin banquet one month before, announcing his intention of invading Western Europe sooner or later. Göring had to admit that once again Hitler was proving to be right. Hitler planned in three weeks' time to launch the mightiest onslaught in history on Russia, and for this he would approach almost every one of Russia's western neighbors for assistance. Only the Swedes would not be invited—"Their ruling class is basically pro-British," Hitler explained to Julius Schnurre in mid-May. "Even the Reichsmarschall has been cured of his infatuation for Sweden."

Göring spent five hours with him and Jeschonnek on June 1. The new campaign was going to be some party, and it was time to start sending out invitations. On June 2, Hitler dropped a broad hint to Mussolini. On the third, after again consulting all afternoon with Göring, he tipped off the Japanese ambassador. The RSVPs trickled in: Hungary and Romania, eager to assist; the Finns, glad to join in. A few days later the high command sent out invitations to forty of Hitler's top commanders to attend a meeting at the Berlin Chancellery on the fourteenth. Almost at the same time, Birger Dahlerus received in Stockholm what he described immediately, on June 9, to the British envoy there as "a rather cryptic message . . . which seems to indicate Germany will attack Russia by about June 15." The message, Dahlerus said, had been telephoned to him by a mutual acquaintance who had just arrived in Stockholm from Berlin. From American files it is plain that Dahlerus had also notified the American legation—"Dahlerus . . . had it first from Göring that Germany meant to attack Russia almost at once."

The historic briefing session began at 11:00 A.M. Göring wrote in his diary, "Führer briefing. Rehearse attack on Russia with high command (OKW), War Dept., Admiralty, all army groups, Luftflotten and staffs present." After lunch, the "discussions continued." Hitler explained more or less convincingly why Germany had no option but to strike at Russia. Deputy Chief of Staff von Waldau recorded a summary in his diary:

Hitler's after-luncheon speech Britain will fight on as long as it can. But Britain's fight only matters if that American aid will take on the Continent. This explains the Russians will intervene. to come early, however. It are not to forfeit the favor

"The bulk of the Russian forces on the frontier, so we have a great task. At 6:00 P.M., Göring briefed Hitler and committed twenty-seven hundred pictures showed four thousand Soviet and radio intelligence had located them. It was hard to divine—Waldau reported the Reichsmarschall assembled his commanders at Carinhall the next day. After a long stroll around the grounds, turned to Berlin, talked for over an hour and Hofer, and boarded his train, materializing from thin air, the private cabin.

Five days later the Polish prime minister, ambassador Tony Biddle. Biddle wrote a letter to President Roosevelt: "I told a close Swedish friend that attack against Russia on Sunday

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Hitler's after-luncheon speech. The main enemy is still Britain.
 Britain will fight on as long as the fight has any purpose. . . .
 But Britain's fight only makes sense as long as they can hope
 that American aid will take effect and that they may find support
 on the Continent. This explains why they have high hopes that
 the Russians will intervene. . . . We want this conflict with Russia
 to come early, however. Indeed, it is absolutely essential, if we
 are not to forfeit the favorable conditions that now prevail.

"The bulk of the Russian forces," continued Waldau's note, "are standing
 on the frontier, so we have a good chance of defeating them right there."
 At 6:00 P.M., Göring briefed Hitler alone on the Luftwaffe's plans. He would
 commit twenty-seven hundred warplanes on the first day. Reconnaissance
 pictures showed four thousand Soviet planes just across the demarcation line,
 and radio intelligence had located a thousand more. Göring's own attitude
 was hard to divine—Waldau remarked on his "meager interest," and when
 the Reichsmarschall assembled his Luftflotte, air zone (Luftgau), and corps
 commanders at Carinhall the next day, Milch too thought him "depressed."
 After a long stroll around the garden at Carinhall, that evening Göring re-
 turned to Berlin, talked for over an hour with his art dealers Behr, Lohse,
 and Hofer, and boarded his train. At eight-thirty it moved off, and as though
 materializing from thin air, the mysterious Swede, Dahlerus, entered his
 private cabin.

Five days later the Polish prime minister, an exile in London, met American
 ambassador Tony Biddle. Biddle reported his conversation that same day in
 a letter to President Roosevelt: The Pole had revealed that Göring had now
 told a close Swedish friend that "he might expect Germany to launch an
 attack against Russia on Sunday June 22."

June 1941

HIS OWN WARRANT

...last a proper war!" exclaimed General Jeschonnek as the German armies uncoiled into Russia. He had good cause for satisfaction. The supremacy on the eastern front. Milch's was destroyed on that first Sunday, 800 Wednesday, and 300 on the fifth day,

...than a few weeks longer, and jostling gun. Alarmed by Bormann's elevation a few weeks earlier, Göring arrived at the front, on the twenty-eighth. He wanted to win. On the next day Hitler signed a decree appointing Göring his exclusive successor in the event of his death. "This by no means eliminated Göring, but as SS Obergruppenführer Gottlob Berger commented, Göring was still the more important man. Berger, under interrogation in May 1945, admitted that Göring even then." The SS chief at the time discovered, for instance, that the

Reichsmarschall was quietly buying up uncut diamonds from Jews in Amsterdam; Himmler began filling dossiers with data like this. His Gestapo chief, Reinhard Heydrich, also had ambitions. He coveted Göring's Currency Protection Unit because of its mouth-watering harvest of seized foreign currency, but he trod very warily. "Heydrich," Göring would smugly comment later, "was much too clever to pick a fight with me." Heydrich preferred to keep Göring's power intact—so that he might pursue his own evil causes under its gaudy, all-embracing cloak.

Göring established his headquarters east at Rostken, just south of Lake Spirding in East Prussia, and parked his luxurious train *Asia* here, about an hour's drive from the Wolf's Lair. Jeschonnek had established the air staff's mobile headquarters, *Robinson*, at the neighboring Lake Goldap. The humid climate that summer affected Göring's health. There were almost daily check-ups by his cardiologist, Professor Heinrich Zahler. Zahler's name figures in Göring's diary on July 20, 22, 23, 24, 26 ("bed rest, headaches"), 27 ("stomach upset, headaches"), and on August 23 ("heart palpitations"), 24, and 25, and again in September—on the twenty-third the Reichsmarschall would record, "heart pains, bad night." Determined to hang on to life long enough to enjoy the fruits of power, Göring began a strenuous program of daily swims, walks, horseback-riding, and even an occasional game of tennis. He telephoned Emmy and Edda daily, arranged occasional flying visits to them; but not once that summer did he visit a front-line Luftwaffe unit. He was bored with the war. When General Hans-Jürgen Stumpff (commanding Luftflotte 5 in Norway) came to see him, Göring interrupted the briefing: "Enough! Now let's take a look around Carinhall!" Stumpff noticed that he kept nodding off.

By mid-July 1941 it was clear that Hitler had launched *Barbarossa* none too soon, and had in fact underestimated the Russian strength. As they marched East, the Germans discovered that the Russians had massed twelve thousand tanks and eight thousand warplanes for strategic plans of their own. "The Red Army's equipment staggers us," wrote Jeschonnek's deputy on July 15. "In their Lemberg [Lvov] salient alone, sixty-three huge airfields, each with two runways and still incomplete, bear witness to Russian attack preparations."

On the following day, July 16, Hitler called his ministers together to discuss how to consolidate Nazi rule in these new territories. Göring wrote in his diary, "7:30 A.M. rose. Party cloudy, sultry." He spent an hour on dispatches and swimming, was briefed at 11:00 by Jeschonnek, and met Milch and Udet at midday, before setting out for the Wolf's Lair at 1:30 P.M. "3:15 p.m., conference with Führer: Rosenberg, Milch, Lammers." (Hitler had appointed Rosenberg minister with overall responsibility for the new eastern territories.)

Both Otto Bräutigam, Rosenberg's ADC, and Bormann wrote full accounts

of the day's historic talks: "At 3:00 P.M.," wrote Bräutigam in his diary, "the Reichsmarschall appeared and the proceedings began." "Let there be no doubt in our minds," Bormann quoted Hitler as saying, "that we shall never depart from these territories. Never again shall there be any military power west of the Urals, even if we have to fight one hundred years to prevent it." There remained only to apportion responsibility for these conquered eastern territories between the Four-Year Plan (Göring), the party (Bormann), and the police executive (Himmler). "Toward 6:00 P.M.," continued Bräutigam's diary, "they took a coffee break. During this the Reichsmarschall thanked the Führer for the high honor he had accorded to fighter-ace Lieutenant Colonel [Werner] Mölders (the Diamonds to the Oak Leaves of the Knight's Cross). The Reichsmarschall was accordingly in high spirits. The Führer heaped scorn on the Swedes for their meager contribution to the struggle against Bolshevism. The Reichsmarschall also termed the Swedes 'decadent.'"

"As you know," continued Hitler, turning to Göring, "I had serious misgivings about this campaign . . . I don't know if I would have made the same decision, if I had been aware of the overall strength of the Soviet Army and particularly of its gigantic tank forces. Then again, it's become clear that it was high time to attack the problem. Next year might already have been too late."

They reached a final settlement on the division of territories. At 8:30 P.M. Rosenberg took his aide, Bräutigam, aside and told him the details:

We have reached compromises [wrote the aide] with the Reichsmarschall, who is to control the economy of the occupied territories with his Economic Operations Staff East, and with the Reichsführer SS [Himmler] who fully intends to direct the operations of his SS police units from Berlin.

To exploit the Caucasus oil fields Göring had set up a commercial monopoly, but the retreating Russian troops had destroyed the wells and removed all the rigs and drilling machinery. Thomas reported to Göring on July 17, then recorded, "Reichsmarschall wants rapid investigation of ways of increasing German fuel imports from (a) Romania (b) the Caucasus."

The Soviets were still far from collapse. Hitler ordered the Luftwaffe to execute "terror raids" on Moscow. Göring called in Jeschonnek on July 18 and 19, and his bomber and fighter experts Galland and Werner Baumbach on the twentieth to discuss the raids. "The signs are multiplying," intelligence chief Canaris told his Abwehr staff that day, however, "that this war will not bring about the internal collapse of Bolshevism that we had anticipated, so much as its invigoration." Göring evidently felt the same misgivings, as he had a four-hour talk alone with the mysterious Swede, Dahlerus, that same day, and invited Canaris for a similar secret talk five days later.

July 1941

SIGNING H

The air force meanwhile bore no signs of yielding.

At the end of July Emmen's husband in Berlin. The Reichsmarschall the following afternoon, J. briefly at his ministry. Here Reinhard Heydrich wanted a document. The SS officer's letterhead. Göring obliged at the station a few minutes later signed the document that weeks later: a paper empowering . . . for an overall unrivaled many's sphere of influence in

He was tired of the war, Carinhall. His mind strayed from von Hammerstein briefed him and described the sprawling familiar scooping gesture. "Do you know how big the 'Have you any idea,' co to be?"

Several times he was awakened in Berlin on August 7, at General Hubert Weise, the Luftwaffe's air defenses in the east. Sepp Angerer, who unrolled a purchased six, including a ba embroidered with gold and silver were, Angerer reported, joint English sister and American suading Mussolini to sequester war with the United States was too. Göring approved. He did not show. After the Fascist dictatorship, he was able to acquire the

In mid-August Göring left around art galleries in Munich, an air-force conference at the Qu eyes once more over the Jeu de signa unit billeted in a châtea strong room concealing another teenth-century Dutch and French too, and returned contentedly to

Aug 1941

"wrote Bräutigam in his diary, 'proceedings began.'" "Let there be no more war," Hitler said, "that we shall never again shall there be any war. We have to fight one hundred years for the apportionment of responsibility for these four years (Göring), the party (Himmler). 'Toward 6:00 P.M.,' we took a coffee break. During this the high honor he had accorded to Mölders (the Diamonds) to the Oak Leaves and Swords was accordingly in high esteem. Swedes for their meager contribution to the Reichsmarschall also termed the

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The air force meanwhile bombed Moscow on July 21 and 22; Stalin showed no signs of yielding.

At the end of July Emmy Göring came back from Bavaria to meet her husband in Berlin. The Reich capital was dampened by summer rains. Late the following afternoon, July 31, as the drizzle cleared, Göring called in briefly at his ministry. Here, at 6:15 P.M., he had a visitor—Gestapo Chief Reinhard Heydrich wanted the favor of the Reichsmarschall's signature on a document. The SS officer had drafted it himself, he had even typed Göring's letterhead. Göring obliged the young Obergruppenführer, then hurried off to the station a few minutes later to meet Emmy, unaware that he had just signed the document that would be used to condemn him to the gallows five years later: a paper empowering Heydrich to "make all necessary preparations . . . for an overall unraveling (*Lösung*) of the Jewish problem within Germany's sphere of influence in Europe."

He was tired of the war, and awarded himself several weeks' leave at Carinhall. His mind strayed far from the battlefields. Judge-Advocate General von Hammerstein briefed him on (August 1) on court-martial cases in Crete, and described the sprawling Palace of Minos. Göring interrupted with his familiar scooping gesture. "That's coming to Carinhall too," he bragged.

"Do you know how big the palace is?" gasped Hammerstein.

"Have you any idea," countered Göring, "how big Carinhall's going to be?"

Several times he was awakened by air-raid alerts, and the Russians actually raided Berlin on August 7, an impertinence that caused Göring to summon General Hubert Weise, the Luftwaffe's commander in chief center, to discuss their air defenses in the east. His diary two days later records two visits by Sepp Angerer, who unrolled a dozen Italian tapestries for his approval. Göring purchased six, including a battle scene and two Renaissance works richly embroidered with gold and silver thread. Two of the larger Gothic tapestries were, Angerer reported, jointly owned by a Princess Rospiljosi with her English sister and American brother—the tapestry expert suggested persuading Mussolini to sequester the Englishwoman's share, while a future war with the United States would enable Italy to seize the brother's share too. Göring approved. He did not hesitate to exploit Mussolini, as his papers show. After the Fascist dictator visited his train at Rostken on the twenty-sixth, he was able to acquire the tapestry.

In mid-August Göring left Carinhall to vacation in Bavaria. He rummaged around art galleries in Munich, then took his train on to Paris ostensibly for an air-force conference at the Quai d'Orsay but in fact in order to cast covetous eyes once more over the Jeu de Paume and the diamonds at Cartiers. A naval signals unit billeted in a château in the Bois de Boulogne had just found a strong room concealing another Rothschild cache, of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Dutch and French paintings. Göring grasped these treasures too, and returned contentedly to the sweltering heat of Berlin.

Nov 1941

it were slowing down Luftwaffe multiple sorties, Luftflotte 4 alone in the east, but the global tasks of the British bombing of northern Italy-held Malta was a constant drain on Rommel's armies, fighting an Axis conference with the Italian High Command at Rominten on October 2, but Rommel supply convoys were being hit by British gifts and medals" at 2:25 P.M., "been practical," he unhelpfully declared war by seizing Malta!" On the staff of Luftflotte 2 (Kesseling) in front to Italy.

Moscow resumed, but Göring refused to let a Romanian air-force general—Göring's illustrious decorations for me."

German armies, aided by their capture of Vyazma and Bryansk. Millions went into captivity. "We have finally triumphed General Jodl on the Western Front, set, and match. He went to Moscow. He phoned Emmy every day. On the Russian front, but on October 12 he strolled around the house [Carter] inspecting the new art treasures and the news that his nineteen-year-old fighter-pilot in France.

On October 15, the air staff issued a report from Moscow. But Göring returned to Moscow once more deteriorating. "Our staff von Waldau that same day, everything is bogged down in Moscow. Drops to -8°C [11°F], eight days of that."

Snow and snow grounded the Luftwaffe. It broke out anew. General von Halder, "I know that the Russians are winning our [army] commands right down to the frontiers. That day, Vice-Chief of Hitler's headquarters, to report on the front fields. When he mentioned that Field Marshal Keitel (chief of the High Command), he shrieked, "is the

uncrowned chief of the OKW as it is! He goes behind my back all the time." Bursting into tears, according to Canaris's diary, Keitel predicted, "Any proposals or successes you tell him about, Göring will turn them to his own advantage—he'll report them to the Führer as though they were his own, without so much as mentioning me as chief of the OKW!"

Canaris arrived at Rominten on the twenty-fourth, but it is plain from the archives that Göring's mind was once again focused elsewhere. That day he was poring over yet more paintings—a Stefan Lochner and Cranach's "Adoration of the Three Kings"—and a 1550 Flemish tapestry that several Swiss dealers had brought to him.

Nobody at any Luftwaffe headquarters believed that the Russians could hold out much longer. "General Jeschonnek," wrote Richthofen to General Rudolf Meister at air-staff headquarters on October 26, "is assuming we shall be staying here until about November 6." But that day came and went, and the snow that began drifting down onto East Prussia, enveloping both Göring's train at Rostken and the Wolf's Lair at Rastenburg, no longer melted away.

He had spent the last half of October 1941 and the first half of November on these freezing, fog-enveloped moors, grilling generals about flak production and radar production, receiving the medal-bearing Slovak leaders Tiso and Tuka, and entertaining his family and in-laws (the relatives of both wives), although Emmy herself had made her excuses and migrated to the warmer climes of southern Germany. He had seen Udet only twice, he realized—the last time on November 1. Göring had returned to Berlin and forgotten the general completely in the press of events—renewed sessions with his cardiologist, and a conference on ways of injecting one million Russian prisoners into Germany's labor-starved war industries. One evening as he was meeting Emmy at the Anhalter Station, the air-raid sirens forced them to shelter in the Kroll Opera's bunker until nearly 5:00 A.M. (Four hundred RAF planes were raiding Mannheim and Berlin.)

At midday on November 17, his personnel chief telephoned to say that Udet was dead. Lying on his bed, the general had phoned his mistress that morning, cried, "They're after me!" and had shot himself while still holding the phone so she could hear. In the suicide's room Körner found empty cognac bottles and crazed farewell messages scrawled across a wall. "Man of Iron," said one, using Göring's nickname from earlier times, "you deserted me!"

Grim-faced, Göring drove straight over to Hitler and stayed with him five hours. Hitler's verdict was harsh. "He took the easy way out," he would remark a year later. Göring was more understanding. "When he saw the chaos," said Göring in 1943, "[Udet] did something which one obviously cannot endorse but which I understand better today than I did at the time."

*The death of Udet
Der Tod von Ernst Udet*

rate a big Jewish exodus will
 provinces? Do you imagine they're going
 provinces? In Berlin they tell us:
 for them either, liquidate them

er, let alone Göring: The Führer
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 marschall's presence in the capital
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 more likely meant the party—or

signed that relatively innocuous
 . In full, it read:

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 ext for an overall unraveling
 in Germany's sphere of in-

surveys of other government
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me shortly a comprehensive
 , and material advance prep-
 final solution of the Jewish

had signed anything but a routine
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 had been dated January 24, 1939,
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öring from blame. Anxious not to
 —one stroke of the pen would have
 o deeply into Himmler's methods.

Thirty miles from Carinhall, recalled Dr. von Ondarza, was the Oranienburg concentration camp. "Göring never once set foot in one," said Ondarza. "He just didn't have the guts. It was characteristic of him," Göring's aide added, "that when the going got rough he just scuttled off to Paris or Italy." No, Göring carefully eschewed any criticism of the SS. "Whoever attacked Himmler," he would explain evasively in May 1945, when taxed with these atrocities, "was eliminated. Besides, he lied to me." Prudence replaced propriety in Göring's demeanor: In August 1942 Himmler wrote to the Air Ministry soliciting assistance with unspecified low-pressure and low-temperature experiments on condemned prisoners at the Dachau concentration camp. Neither Göring nor his Staatssekretär inquired into what kind of experiments were involved. "I *did* tell Göring," Milch confided to his private diary four years later. "Göring was against any collaboration but insisted on a very polite tone toward Himmler."

In fact, Göring went out of his way to cultivate the Reichsführer's friendship. The records show Himmler writing to Chief Forester Scherping on September 12, 1942, thanking him for Göring's invitation to shoot a "very fine Rominten stag." When Herbert Göring—by now manager of the Berlin office of United Steel—incurred Hermann's wrath in 1943, the Reichsmarschall would write asking Himmler to strip Herbert of his rank as honorary SS Obersturmbannführer, and invite Hitler to pass a law depriving "unworthy" people of their famous names. And when Göring's brother Albert (who picturesquely insisted under American interrogation, "I am the *real* brother of Hermann Göring!") reported rumors from a Dr. Max Winkler about the machine-gunning of Jews in Poland, the Reichsmarschall ingeniously forwarded the letter to the SS to attend to.

In the winter of 1941–42 he did send a senior Forschungsamt official, Ernst-Friedrich Scholer, to investigate a rumor of atrocities in the Ukraine. Scholer returned with snapshots of men pointing rifles downward into large pits. In such disturbing instances, Göring regularly allowed himself to be fobbed off, as he related three years later.

I heard, for example, that a large load of Jews left for Poland during the winter and that some of them froze to death in their vehicles. I heard of these things mostly from the ranks of my employees and from the people. When I made inquiries, I was told that such things would not happen again—it was claimed that the trains had been misrouted.

Then there was some talk about *Vernichtungstruppen* [destruction squads]. What I was told was this—that there were many diseased people in these camps, and that many died of epidemics. These squads had the job of taking the corpses to a crematorium where they would be cremated.

*Odets' suicide terrified Göring
 reduced his courage. It may also
 have disoriented him as a result. He
 no longer had the same stomach for
 persecuting the Jews.*

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only the qualities and not the substance of things, their phe-
nomena, but not their being. He considered, however, that even
this relative knowledge sufficed for the needs of life and the order-
ing of our actions. The existence of God is demonstrated directly
from the existence and nature of the world; the maxims of mor-
ality can be demonstrated with the same precision as the rules
of arithmetic. In Locke we have the first genuinely English phi-
losophy, which embraced all the decisive national characteristics:
it is deistic and moralist, democratic and practical, a triumph of
sound human understanding, of the golden mean and the truth
of facts; we shall often meet it again in its varied forms.

England was the sole European great power that emancipated
herself from the contemporary absolutism; Germany, on the con-
trary, may almost be said to have swallowed it whole. The rever-
ence of the Germans for even their smallest potentates was bound-
less. A publicist wrote to the duodecimo prince Ernst Ludwig of
Hesse: "If God were not God, who would have more right to be
God than Your Princely Serenity?" And even before officials
— of whom Christian Wolff said that as the monarch's assistants
they should be regarded as "princes in miniature" — people
almost died of awe. In consequence of the theory of state omni-
potence, sovereigns felt themselves privileged, and indeed obliged, to
interfere in everything, supervising and correcting the entire pri-
vate life of citizens like tyrannical fathers of families or form-
masters. Even the *Acta Eruditorum*, Germany's only scientific
publication of those days, announced that nothing that concerns
the rights and the actions of princes would be criticized in its
columns. The king's subjects bent the knee not only to his person,
but even to his empty carriage when they met it in the street. It
was at this time, too, that the army of court offices was established
— chamberlain, chaplain, medicus, master of the stables, master
of the hunt, master of the ceremonies. Tradesmen regarded it as
the highest honour to be appointed court baker, tailor, shoemaker,
or gardener. The untitled, the bourgeoisie and the common people,
were despised as *roturiers*, existing merely for the purpose of sup-
plying money, soldiers, and hands to the court. It was not that
they were treated with cruelty: they were merely considered as
creatures of a different order with correspondingly different duties
and different rights — or, rather, no rights at all. Macaulay says,

Thomasius

1941
D.T.
-6 A.Y.

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ercial greatness to fall

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H. Meray in his most
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on in vain. The royal
s followed. The lights
ness; there was world-

rs had already called

Jan 1941

Napoleon "*Père la violette*" because they expected him back with the March violets. On his way from Cannes to Paris not a single shot was fired, all the armies sent against him going over to his side. Some men died for joy at the news of his landing. But the Emperor was no more the "giant cell" of former days. The mightiest of all dramas and destiny in modern history ended at Waterloo.

Napoleon himself had always been completely convinced that his whole destiny was determined and conducted by some sort of magic impulse. Once, when he had been nearly killed by a fall from a carriage, he said to Metternich: "I felt life fading from me, but I said to myself: 'I will not die,' and I lived," and another time, warned of threatened attempts on his life, he replied: "What have I to fear? I cannot be murdered." His Egyptian proclamation ran: "Is there any man so blind as not to recognize that my action is directed by fate? . . . The day will come when the whole world will see that I am led by a higher hand, and that human effort can do nothing against me." His contemporaries, friends and opponents, had long ceased to measure him by human standards; they regarded him as a dazzling irresistible manifestation of Nature with which it was idle to argue, magnificent to look on, devastating in its effects.

On one occasion Talleyrand said to Napoleon: "Good taste is your personal enemy. If you could have got rid of it by bombardment it would long since have been conquered." A true saying, truer than that finished court-intriguer could guess. Naturally Napoleon was without taste. Destitute of taste and tact, education and culture, he exploded the whole backward, corrupt, calcified world of feudalism and diplomacy, of drawing-room chatterers and paper strategists. A giant is not a pleasing spectacle. An earthquake, a volcano emitting lava and dust, is not a pleasant spectacle. No natural catastrophe, no elemental event, nothing beyond life-size is in "good taste." What is in good taste is the average, the conventional, the clean copy, the known. Any phenomenon which is not completely comprehensible confuses, irritates, and disturbs us. It has the bad taste to get on our nerves.

We only need to look at any single department of Napoleon's activity — for example, his generalship — to understand how this conscious and obstinate breach with the past dominated all his

Napoleon
and destiny

* D.T.

Napoleon
and strategy

* D.T. debates when to offer
this to Actter. On 19th, D.H.
discovers it for himself

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

think of his political organization as a party. He called it his movement (*meine Bewegung*) and insisted on that usage.

He was vicious and vindictive, capriciously and unpredictably cruel. He was also kindly and considerate. Sometimes he liked to think of himself as a very humane person, but on other occasions he saw himself as barbarous. "Yes," he said, "we are barbarians! We want to be barbarians! It is an honorable title." Indeed, his self-image kept oscillating between the two extremes of kindness and barbarity. Late in the night of 28-29 September 1941 he mused, "Thank God I always avoided persecuting my enemies." But any inclination to "softness" and charity was immediately countered by assertions of hardness and brutality. One day at lunch, for example, he reflected, "When I think about it, I realize that I'm extraordinarily humane." But a few moments later, he announced: "I see no other solution but the extermination [of the Jews]."

He sometimes expressed conflict over his self-image in adjacent sentences. On the night of 25-26 September 1941, for example, he said, "I would prefer not to see anyone suffer, not to do harm to anyone. But then I realize that the species is in danger and . . . sentiment gives way to the coldest reason." And on the night of 1-2 February 1942: "I was pitiless. . . . But in a general way I can say that I am full of moderation. I am certainly not a brutal man by nature." 113

He not only talked about being kind and considerate, but many of his actions really did show genuine concern for other people. He sent flowers to his secretaries on their birthdays; on long motor trips he insisted that his chauffeurs be fed before he himself ate; he sent at least two hand-painted thank-you postcards to the kindly Jewish doctor who had treated his mother and himself; he remembered his family and servants in his will; he remembered the 40th anniversary of a general's military service. He once reminisced about an old woman who had been kind to him many years before he came to power when she had rented him a room in Munich. He told an aide to find out if she were still alive and to arrange an allowance for her. When another of his former landladies became senile and deranged, Hitler was invariably gentle and considerate, spending hours in quiet talk to soothe her. He had also lived in rooms belonging to a tailor in Munich named Josef Popp. When Popp died in 1935 his family received from Hitler a monthly stipend of 150 marks with the understanding that they would not divulge the source of the income. Nor did he forget his boyhood friend's mother. In 1944 he sent Frau Kubizek a food package on her 80th birthday. His friend commented, "I never discovered how he came to know about it."

He was particularly kind to children, and showed his thoughtfulness on many occasions. One day in 1928 he stood with several bereaved children at the grave of their mother, holding their hands and praying with them. Men who knew him well have said that their chil-

The Image and the Man

dren "simply adored him," and relaxed and genuinely friendly little children. "It was one of recalls, "when a warm human fee

He also had tender feeling days he always saved a bit of dri in the Schönbrunn where he we was very fond of birds and felt which in German literature ofte and death. He gave special order

During the first months at three separate laws on the protec official *Reichsgesetzblatt* dutiful and penalties for cruel treatme regulation, dated 14 January 14 the suffering of lobsters and cral lations for their preparation in all

Crabs, lobsters, and other ci them in rapidly boiling water individually.

High officials in Hitler's govern tion of the most humane dead passed, and two officials of the M arly disquisition on whether it them in cold water which was s them headfirst into boiling water abrupt immersion in rapidly boi jurists noted in the official intro Protection of Animals, the purg Hitler, was "to awaken and stre of the highest moral values of th

Hitler's kindness to crustac beings. During the same period ported to have said to an asso races? . . . Of course I do. . brutal strength. . . . The masses to make them shudderingly sul camps to become old age pensio way of politics." 114

The man who was constan charisma appealed to millions c capacity for friendship. He abu only friend of his youth. He or friend of the early battle years.

of the event, Hitler set the date of invasion for 22 June, the precise anniversary, according to tradition, of Napoleon's ill-fated campaign. And why, of all the thousands upon thousands of alternatives, did he choose the code name of "Barbarossa" for the Russian campaign? His military planners had called the operational scheme "Fritz," after the victorious Prussian king. But on Hitler's direct personal order the name was changed to Barbarossa.¹⁵⁷

Why that particular name? It may be true that Hitler saw himself, like Friedrich Barbarossa, as a crusader with a mission to destroy an infidel enemy to the East. But Barbarossa had failed. In fact, he was the most celebrated failure of medieval German history: he had failed in five campaigns against the Italian city-states; he had failed to unify the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation; and he had failed during the Third Crusade, and had drowned while bathing in the Seleph River in 1190. Adolf Hitler knew these things about Barbarossa. Among the books he borrowed from a private library there was a biography of the Hohenstaufen ruler recording these facts which, indeed, were common knowledge to any patriotic schoolboy interested in German medieval history.¹⁵⁸

Hitler was pathologically afraid of water and had nightmares about loss of breath, strangulation, and drowning. The words he used in announcing the invasion of Russia are therefore worth remembering. "The world," he had said, "will hold its breath." When Adolf Hitler held his breath and counted anxiously to ten while his valet tied his tie, he was, on one level, symbolically enacting suicide and self-destruction.¹⁵⁹

At first the invasion went so well that Hitler's Ministry of Propaganda announced in triumph, "In seven short days, the Führer's offensive has smashed the Red Army to splinters . . . the eastern continent lies, like a limp virgin, in the mighty arms of the German Mars." It did indeed look as if the Soviet Union would have to capitulate, as Hitler's troops battled into the very suburbs of Moscow and as his soldiers, like Napoleon's, saw through their field glasses the gilded towers of the Kremlin against the darkening sky.

That Moscow never fell is to be credited to the heroism of Soviet defenders, but also to Hitler's self-defeating mistakes. Instead of concentrating his forces for the drive on the capital, Hitler suddenly insisted on weakening that drive disastrously by splitting his armies. Against the advice of his generals, he insisted upon swinging south with half his forces into the Ukraine. Then, when the Ukrainians, with their long history of independence and hatred of Stalin's police state, welcomed Hitler's troops with shouts of joy and offered alliance, Hitler ordered their leaders shot and their people enslaved. It was, one historian of the war has written, "one of the most colossal errors" of Hitler's career. Moscow was also saved by Russia's most historic field commander—General Winter. When the temperatures during the first week of December dropped below zero, German soldiers froze by the thousands because, thanks to Hitler's personal orders, no winter clothing

had been issued. The t they permitted the wear

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had been issued. The boots of his soldiers were fitted so precisely that they permitted the wearing of only one pair of light socks.¹⁶⁰

Throughout Operation Barbarossa, Hitler continued to make strange decisions. Incredibly, for example, he left an entire German army behind in the Crimea, saying that it could not possibly be withdrawn, for to do so might adversely affect the overall political situation in Turkey. Later in the war, an army group was left in the Baltic area because, Hitler explained, he wanted to show the Swedes that he was still a power in the Baltic.¹⁶¹ Looking at these and other self-defeating decisions of the Russian campaign, a German authority on Hitler's military leadership asked, "What was going on in the head of this man...?"¹⁶²

The question must be broadened beyond Hitler's separate tactical and strategic blunders, for the entire enterprise was basically irrational. Consider the awful and unnecessary gamble he took in attacking so cooperative and powerful an ally. If he lost the military campaign, the whole war was lost; even if he "won" and defeated some of the Red armies in Western Russia, the war was far from over. For he would have been sucked ever further eastward, while England, aided by America, still pounded him from the air. The two-front war he had created would continue. Why take these risks at all? Was it not more rational to remain at peace with his ally and co-conspirator? Why did he not simply consolidate the vast land areas he had attained through the secret protocols of the Nazi-Soviet Pact and his own conquests, the European continent stretching from the English Channel to central Poland which he already held in thrall?

Reason, it seems, did not dictate Hitler's Eastern policy.

WAR ON THE UNITED STATES

In the midst of catastrophic failures on the Russian front, Hitler on 11 December 1941 took the initiative to declare war on the United States, the greatest industrial power on earth.

Immediately after the war, the State Department sent a delegation of specialists to Germany to interrogate Nazi leaders about Hitler and his conduct of the war. Neither members of the commission themselves nor top German officials of the army and Foreign Office could give an adequate explanation for Hitler's decision. The leader of the mission reported: "We found the most baffling question in the whole Nazi story to be the prompt German declaration of war on the United States."¹⁶³ Years later, an American historian writing an account of Nazi-American relations recognized the same problem and acknowledged that he too could give no satisfactory answer:

This declaration [of war on the United States] . . . has never been satisfactorily explained. It was indeed contrary to everything which Hitler had practiced and preached about German foreign policy in general and the United States in particular from the early days in

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Munich to the final hours in Berlin. . . . His reasons for declaring war are not entirely clear.¹⁰⁴

Another diplomatic historian agrees: "The underlying logic of the Führer's policy towards the United States defies analysis . . . it was an irrational act. . . . By the declaration of war, Germany lost finally and irrevocably all hope of winning the war against the Soviet Union."¹⁰⁵

Since the rational mind recoils from mysteries, rational explanations have been provided. First, Hitler declared war on America, it is said, because he held the country in contempt and was convinced that it presented him with no military problem. There is some evidence to support this view. Hitler told Mussolini that American armament statistics were "lies pure and simple." To General Halder he said that American military power was "one big bluff," and concluded roundly that the United States was "incapable of conducting war." Hitler's racial theory also led him to the conclusion that America was "half-Judaized, half-Negrified. . . . Americans have the brains of a hen."¹⁰⁶

But Hitler also flatly contradicted his own denigration of America. His split way of viewing things permitted him to argue that because of its Nordic stock Americans were a superior people—they were "unbelievably clever." He concluded that "compared to the old Europe . . . America emerges as a young, racially select people." He told Hanfstaengl that the key reason Germany lost World War I was because of the entry of the United States, and "that must never happen again."¹⁰⁷

Whatever else Hitler said about America's decadence and incapacity to wage war, his orders to commanders of the German Navy and Luftwaffe showed respect and fear of U.S. power. The orders were clear: America was not to be antagonized. All naval and air incidents in the Atlantic must be avoided to keep America out of the war. When naval leaders protested that lend-lease supplies were hurting Germany, Hitler was adamant. As late as November 1941 he said that "under no circumstances should Germany risk American entry into the war." His orders were not to be changed even if the Neutrality Acts were repealed. He was particularly concerned lest Germany become involved in fighting the United States and the Soviet Union simultaneously. Again and again he repeated that there should be no war with America until the Soviet Union had surrendered. These were the standing orders until the very day of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.¹⁰⁸ Hitler also gave the German press repeated instructions not to offend Americans. In particular, the press was to stop attacking its favorite targets, the American president and his wife. One such order reads, "Even statements of Mrs. Roosevelt are not to be mentioned."¹⁰⁹

Second, it has been suggested that Hitler declared war on America out of loyalty to his Japanese ally and in fulfillment of his treaty obligations. But Hitler's concept of honor was not one of his more conspicuous virtues. Further, the Tripartite Pact with Japan and Italy of 1940 was purely defensive; there was no obligation whatever for Ger-

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many to go to war *unless* America had opened at Pearl Harbor. That has described it, a "Hollo distrust. After Hitler had confirmed the Japanese about Bushido, out Hitler's knowledge and completely surprised and unpleasant on the United States be

It is true that during the time when his attack on Russia promised to join Japan in winning a draft treaty to that effect, Hitler wanted Japan to attack Russia. He drafted a treaty of 5 December 1941 in fighting Russia.¹⁷¹ Nor did he seek such help. As Rich has noted, Hitler was not with the United States . . . procrastinate about fulfilling his promises. At the very least he might have demanded a return for German support in American shipments to Russia of the kind. With absolute certainty and fully aware that no treaty would declare war on America

A third explanation for Hitler's declaration of war in December 1941 became would attack, and he wanted to be true that he harbored suspicion of "Roosevelt, urged on by Japanese war and annihilate the Nation declaration of war on America problem was not only unsound. During the first week of December the initial Staff noted that "the initiative all along the Front Headquarters a series of statements 6 December 1941 the Red Army counteroffensive west of Moscow had insisted did not exist. The losses in men and materiel reported, "there spread a feeling of *gangs Stimmung*] had come to the Marshal Keitel, chief of the Hitler sat gloomily staring at the news was not much more were pushing Rommel back

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many to go to war *unless America attacked Japan*. That is not what hap- pened at Pearl Harbor. The Tripartite Pact remained, as one historian has described it, a "Hollow Alliance" torn by suspicion and mutual distrust. After Hitler had caused his ally to lose face by refusing to in- form the Japanese about Barbarossa, Japan had attacked America with- out Hitler's knowledge and independent of his support. Hitler was com- pletely surprised and unprepared for Pearl Harbor. He did not declare war on the United States because he felt bound by a treaty. ¹⁷⁰

It is true that during the first week of December (at precisely the time when his attack on Russia was in serious trouble) he made verbal promises to join Japan in war against the United States, and he drew up a draft treaty to that effect. It is said that he did so because he desper- ately wanted Japan to attack the Soviet Union from the rear. But this draft treaty of 5 December *makes no mention whatever* of Japanese help in fighting Russia. ¹⁷¹ Nor did the Japanese give any verbal promises of such help. As Rich has noted, "Once Japan had committed itself to war with the United States . . . Hitler might surely have found excuses to procrastinate about fulfilling his pledge to join Japan in that war. At the very least he might have demanded Japanese support against Russia in return for German support against America, if only a promise to stop American shipments to Russia via Vladivostok." ¹⁷² But Hitler did nothing of the kind. With absolutely no assurance of help from his ally, and fully aware that no treaty required him to do so, he personally de- cided to declare war on America. ¹⁷³

A third explanation has been given. It is said that Hitler declared war in December 1941 because he believed that sooner or later America would attack, and he wanted to fight at the most propitious time. It is true that he harbored suspicions of a Jewish plot, and believed that "Roosevelt, urged on by Jewry, [had] already quite resolved to go to war and annihilate National Socialism." ¹⁷⁴ But the timing of Hitler's declaration of war on America was very peculiar indeed. The Russian problem was not only unsolved, it was becoming downright menacing. During the first week of December, a member of the German Opera- tional Staff noted that "the Red Army almost overnight snatched the initiative all along the Front and thus administered to German Supreme Headquarters a series of shocks such as it had never known before." On 6 December 1941 the Red Army under Marshal Georgi Zhukov started a counteroffensive west of Moscow with 100 fresh divisions which Hitler had insisted did not exist. The Germans were hurled back amid enor- mous losses in men and material. "In Hitler's headquarters," Domarus reported, "there spread a feeling that the end of the world [*Weltunter- gangsstimmung*] had come." An adjutant recorded, "Everything indi- cates that the goals of the campaign cannot be reached . . ."; Field Marshal Keitel, chief of the High Command, wanted to commit suicide; Hitler sat gloomily staring off into space. ¹⁷⁵

The news was not much better in North Africa, where the British were pushing Rommel back to his original starting point. During this

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first fortnight in December, headquarters was additionally depressed by a cold wave that swept the Eastern Front: "Temperatures of -30 [to] -35 degrees centigrade were paralyzing the troops and making weapons unusable and reports kept coming in that the danger of severe defeat was . . . limitless." ¹⁷⁶

The timing of the declaration thus took place amid clear and ominous signs of Hitler's military failure. After insisting for months that he would never provoke America, he suddenly declared war at a time when he could least afford so powerful an enemy. *Why had he done it?* It was a personal decision about which he had informed neither the Foreign Office, nor the Wehrmacht. "As a result," Deputy Operations Chief Warlimont wrote, "we were now faced with a war on two fronts in the most serious conceivable form."

It is now clear from the testimony of German Army and Navy and the chief of the Wehrmacht Operations Staff (General Jodl) that there were *no plans whatever for war against the United States*.

General Warlimont quotes a conversation with his superior which must be considered among the most remarkable in the annals of the Prussian-German Army on the eve of war:

Jodl: The Staff must now examine where the United States is most likely to employ the bulk of her forces initially, the Far East or Europe. We cannot take further decisions until that has been clarified.

Warlimont: Agreed. This examination is obviously necessary, but so far, we have never considered a war against the United States and so have no data on which to base this examination; we can therefore hardly undertake this job just like that.

Jodl: See what you can do. When we get back tomorrow we will talk about this in more detail.

As Warlimont commented laconically, "This and no more was the beginning for our headquarters of German strategy against America. . . ." ¹⁷⁷ In an interview after the war, Field Marshal Göring, commander of the Luftwaffe, also confessed his ignorance of Hitler's declaration and concluded, quite rightly, that his Führer must have acted "impulsively." ¹⁷⁸

Certainly the Nazis welcomed the Japanese attack on America and were very pleased indeed to see the Arsenal of Democracy attacked from the rear. But that had already been achieved by Pearl Harbor, without any commitment on Hitler's part. As General Jodl commented after the war, "We should have preferred a new and powerful ally without a new and powerful enemy." ¹⁷⁹

Hitler's declaration of war was of very considerable political help to President Roosevelt. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt was afraid that the American people would demand a concentra-

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tion of military forces in the of the priority that Roosevelt MacGregor Burns has emphasized, after all Washington with only a holding action be left with only a war in the

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tion of military forces in the Pacific and thus force a complete revamping of the priority that Roosevelt was giving to the European theater. James MacGregor Burns has emphasized Roosevelt's problem: "Was it possible, after all Washington's elaborate efforts to fight first in Europe, with only a holding action in the Pacific, that the United States would be left with only a war in the Far East? . . ." 180

A formal German declaration of war on America would solve President Roosevelt's dilemma and clear the political air. Hitler, who had never declared war formally on any other country, obliged Roosevelt now. In doing so, he cut the ground from under the president's political opponents. For after Hitler had declared war on America, even the most vociferous "noninterventionist" could hardly object to sending all-out aid to our European comrades in arms. Proof of how much Hitler had helped Roosevelt came on the very day of Hitler's declaration. When, on 11 December, the president asked Congress to recognize that a state of war existed between the United States and Germany, not one member of Congress voted against a resolution which, had it been taken a few days earlier, almost surely would have failed. It is, of course, quite possible that the United States could have been drawn into war against Hitler at some future time anyway. We shall never know. We do know that "the Führer's initiative gave immeasurable aid and comfort to his opponents and victims." 181

These, then, are the "rational" explanations that have been given for Hitler's self-defeating decision to declare war on America: he had a confused conception of the United States; he wanted to help his Japanese ally; he preferred to attack America before being attacked. But the reasons, somehow, do not add up. Both in retrospect and at the time, judged in either military or political terms, it was an unnecessary and irrational act which benefited his enemies far more than it helped him. "Hitler had not only blundered," one authority has concluded, "he had ruined his own cause." The Führer himself ruefully admitted that there was no logic for what he had done. "War with the United States," he said, "was a tragedy and illogical." 182

We must agree with him. Why, then, had he done it?

It would be gratifying, at the end of this discussion, if we could now show how easily psychohistory can solve a problem that has baffled conventional historians. But it is not at all clear that it can. For again we encounter problems of human motivation which no historian can feel confident about solving. Psychology can help us here, but that is all it can do. For psychohistory cannot supplant traditional history; it can only supplement it by adding depth to our understanding of historical personalities. And even with its help, we may doubt that we shall ever be able to "explain satisfactorily," fully, and finally *why* it was that Hitler did what he did.

The question, ultimately, is unanswerable. But let us not despair.

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We can respond to it the way all historians—and psychoanalysts—must respond when asked to explain the motivations of man: we can venture some cautious guesses.

Let us guess first that both Hitler and the historians are correct: his declaration of war on America (like many of his acts) cannot be understood by logic and common sense. It was indeed "an irrational act." But that assertion scarcely concludes the matter. Rather than terminating discussion, it leaves us with the problem of trying to find reasons for his irrational behaviour. It is my guess that Hitler's fateful decision was influenced by three things: his lifelong difficulty with personal identification; his unconscious desire for defeat; and his irrational belief that ultimate triumph lay in total destruction.

* Personal pride and prestige, it has often been asserted, were reasons why Hitler declared war on America. Among all the Nazi leaders interviewed after the war, "the answer uniformly obtained was that Hitler had acted from motives of prestige." He wanted to declare war on Roosevelt before Roosevelt could get America to declare war on him.¹⁸³

"Prestige" certainly was involved. But it went far deeper than a mere desire to upstage FDR. This decision cut to the very core of Hitler's being, for his identity as a person was being threatened on the Eastern Front by the "subhuman Slavs" and "Bolshevized Jews" who led the Red Army. This scum was actually defeating him! His self-image as an invincible, masculine, all-conquering Führer was dissolving before his eyes. That must never be allowed to happen. He would show *them*—that is, he would show himself. He would prove to himself that he still existed as the invincible myth-person he had created. Since he had condemned himself to military infallibility as the "Greatest Field Commander of All Time," he must strike a new and even more commanding image; he must conquer an even more unconquerable foe than Russia. He would destroy America.

This interpretation of Hitler's motivation, based partly on Erikson's formulation of identity crises, would stress that throughout his life Adolf Hitler was plagued by problems of identity diffusion. He worried continually about "finding" himself as a person (see Chapter 3, p. 173, Chapter 5, p. 357). Such people, Erikson has shown, have recurrent and intense feelings of anxiety about their very existence. When they act in ways which seem totally irrational, even dangerous to themselves, they do so because they are trying to resolve the question of who they really are; they are reaffirming that they really do exist as the person they want to be. Hence, when they are confronted by a crisis situation in which they feel their psychological existence threatened, they may provoke encounters that bring an even more acute crisis in order to reassure themselves. These self-imposed crises may actually be more self-destructive than self-affirming, but they are covertly intended to test and reaffirm precariously held feelings of personal identity which seem to be slipping away.

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Thus, when Hitler's ex Eastern Front during the psychologically imperative for greater risk. "It would be suggested, "that a character provoke a crisis in order to do so by making *direct* such as the United States. better, in order to heighten and thus to counteract the dissolved." ¹⁸⁴

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Thus, when Hitler's existence as a person was threatened on the Eastern Front during the first weeks of December 1941, it was psychologically imperative for him at that time to take a prompt and even greater risk. "It would be exactly then," an Eriksonian psychiatrist has suggested, "that a character such as Hitler would be most stirred to provoke a crisis in order to reassert his very existence. He would try to do so by making *direct* contact with a very powerful counterforce, such as the United States. In fact, the stronger the counterforce the better, in order to heighten his sense of contact, of being in touch, and thus to counteract the terrifying feeling that his 'self' was being dissolved."¹⁸⁴

Another psychological interpretation of Hitler's irrational action also seems possible: he declared war on America not so much to test and confirm his own identity as to respond to an unconscious urge for self-destruction. Hitler—like other borderlines—thought in totalities. He simply could not conceive, he often said, of any alternative between complete victory and absolute catastrophe. He would either be a conquering lion or a sacrificial lamb; if he could not be creator, he would be destroyer.

The moment that Hitler decided he could no longer be a conqueror for Germany and must therefore become its destroyer was a decisive moment in history. It was also a moment that is difficult to pinpoint. Certainly Hitler kept talking about "inevitable victory" long after his reason told him it was not possible. But it seems most likely that he realized, after the first major defeats in Russia in early December 1941, that he could not gain the kind of victory he required. He articulated that conclusion to others sometime later. General Jodi's war diary records that by the turn of the year 1941-1942, Hitler had made it clear to him that "victory could no longer be attained." An authority on Hitler's military strategy puts the date even earlier, saying that by mid-November Hitler realized that victory was "no longer attainable." Certainly he knew it by the time of the Red Army's sweeping winter offensive of 6-7 December 1941.¹⁸⁵ It was an ominous conclusion. For it was at this time that he decided to defeat a different kind of enemy and ordered the massacre of the Jews; it was at this time also, during the first defeats in Russia, that he declared war on America.

He did so, we are speculating, because his deeply split mind saw total defeat as the only alternative left to him. The question now became how to achieve a catastrophic defeat worthy of his historic greatness. This seems to have been the problem on his mind when he confided to an intimate, "I have to attain immortality even if the whole German nation perishes in the process."¹⁸⁶

Hitler's thinking often went back to World War I, an experience that had burned deeply into his mind. As a front-line soldier and racist demagogue after the war, he believed that German defeat had been caused by two things: Jewish traitors and American intervention. Over and over again he told Hanfstaengl: "The only thing that brought our

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From Private Neurosis to Public Policy

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There was, we have also been suggesting, another pattern in his life: the unconscious impulse to punish himself and to fail. Very often he had tried to direct that impulse away from himself by punishing others. The juxtaposition of two decisions he made within two days in December 1941 suggests a link connecting punishment of self with punishment of others. On 11 December he had assured himself of defeat by declaring war on the United States while Russia was attacking him; on the next day, 12 December, he set forth a decree designed to inflict upon others the most terrifying punishment he could imagine. He called it the *Nacht und Nebel* decree. Literally it meant “Night and Fog.” And that meant that any person who was deemed guilty of less than total loyalty to him could be arrested without charge, that no relative would be informed of the prisoner’s disappearance, that his whereabouts would never be learned—the person was to disappear into perpetual night and fog. But even that was not enough. He had to project in a different way: he would destroy *all* Germans. For all Germany was guilty and unworthy. Thus he cried out: “Germany is not worthy of me [*meiner nicht würdig*]; let her perish.”¹⁸⁰

But what did these words really mean? In destroying Germany he was, in a sense, destroying himself, for as he had so often said, “*Ich bin das deutsche Volk!*” But all his life he had also identified Germany with his mother. Is it possible that he was destroying the Motherland now because she was deserting him, just as his mother, Klara, had abandoned him when he was little and allowed his father to punish him? “Let her perish.” Was this punishment for his mother? Or was it something else?

He had tried to blame the German people for his own failure and guilt. He had repeated over and over again that “they” were not worthy of him; he had killed them by the millions. But the haunting fear could not be exorcised. Perhaps, after all, he was not worthy of them—*let him perish*. Perhaps. At any rate, that is what he was about to do, thus fulfilling the promise he had made in a dozen moments of despair: he would kill himself.

TRIUMPH THROUGH SELF-DESTRUCTION

Our Führer, Adolf Hitler, fighting to the last breath against Bolshevism, fell for Germany this afternoon. . . .

—German radio announcement.
1 May 1945

During his last days, members of Hitler’s entourage were shocked to discover that their once indomitable Führer had become a trembling, broken old man, his once immaculate uniform now flecked with sputum

used in the training of infantrymen, where the dogs had to demonstrate whether they had intelligence as well as courage.⁴

The friend of women, children, and animals—this was one face of Hitler, neither acted nor feigned, but entirely genuine. There was, however, a second face which he did not show to his table companions, though it was no less genuine.

In his *Table Conversations* Hitler said that he would personally shoot down whoever dared to commit certain offenses. Knowing that he had never personally fired a shot at a political enemy, his guests did not take his warning at face value. At times Hitler would get carried away and make terrible threats. But he rarely spoke of the hideous orders he was giving precisely during the months when the *Table Conversations* were being recorded, and which in the end cost millions their lives. To point out only a few examples from the months in question:

September 16, 1941: Stopping General Hoepner's armored column short of Leningrad, with a view toward eliminating the population of the city by starvation; similar thoughts about the fate of Moscow.

October 21, 1941: Execution of fifty French hostages by firing squad because of the killing of a German officer; thenceforth, in all theaters of war, strictest application of the policy of breaking terror with terror.

January 20, 1942: Wannsee conference, initiating the deportation of the Jews to the East and beginning their systematic annihilation.

February 1942: Integration of the steadily burgeoning concentration camps into the German war economy.

March 21, 1942: Authorization for *Gauleiter* Sauckel to incorporate foreign slave workers into the Germany economy.

⁴Once I had an opportunity to observe how well trained one of Hitler's dogs was. On a walk near the *Wolfsschanze* one day I came across a non-commissioned officer who was responsible for the dogs' care and was taking one of them for a walk. Since I used to have shepherd dogs myself, I observed the dog with interest, whereupon the soldier showed me how quickly she obeyed every command to sit, stand, and so forth. I had the impression not of a dog but a machine, and wondered whether Hitler in the training of his dogs was not motivated by a desire to extinguish the individual wills even of these animals.

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serious. The survey report of the Operations Staff of the High Command of the Wehrmacht, in which these figures appeared, concluded that, "because of the impossibility of fully replacing losses in men and material, the overall fighting power of the Wehrmacht is less than it was in spring 1941."

This conclusion was all the more grave because there was no prospect whatever for change in the adverse factors that had brought it about. In an address to officer candidates of the Wehrmacht on May 30, 1942, Hitler explained that the rising birth rate stimulated through National Socialist propaganda would far outstrip the number of dead. This sort of calculation, in an entirely different context, might have been appropriate for a bank or an industrial concern, but it was nothing less than monstrous when applied to human life. Moreover, it proved to be patently false, for the war resulted in the net loss of many millions of German lives.⁶

There was no getting around the fact that during the winter of 1941-42 the war had entered a new phase. Hitler, who was precisely informed about events, was fully and deeply aware of this, no matter how he tried to think otherwise. When General Alfred Jodl, Chief of the Operations Staff of the High Command of the Wehrmacht, finally was free to speak at the end of the war, he made a revealing statement. On May 15, 1945, shortly after Hitler's suicide, he said at a staff conference in Mürwik in Schleswig-Holstein that it had become clear to Hitler and himself, after the catastrophe of the winter of 1941-42, that "victory could no longer be achieved."⁷

⁶The text of Hitler's Berlin Sports Palace speech of May 30, 1942, to ten thousand officer candidates is appended to Schramm's edition of the *Table Conversations*. Schramm has estimated that approximately four million Germans died as military casualties and another half-million as civilians (as a result of air raids and other war-related causes).—ED.

⁷After the German capitulation early in May 1945, the High Command of the Wehrmacht was permitted to function at the headquarters established at Mürwik near Flensburg in Schleswig-Holstein for another two weeks, providing continuity in the transfer of control to the victors. The staff conference records kept by Major Joachim Schultz-Naumann report General Alfred Jodl as having said on May 15, 1945, that although the General Staff accepted Hitler's argument that the war against the Soviet Union was necessary, yet "we all . . . entered this war against Russia with anxiety at the thought of its outcome." Jodl added that it was clear, in particular to Hitler

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Only after his conflict with the Catholic Church was well underway did Hitler turn his attention to the Protestants, for whom he had even less respect than he did for the Catholics. "The hypocritical bigotry of the Protestants is far worse than that of the Catholic Church," he said in December 1941. The Catholic Church had a broader outlook, in Hitler's opinion, and was also more cunning in the matter of forgiving sins. Describing the only conference he ever had with the leaders of the Protestant Church in Germany,

alarm mounted as word spread of more and more patients dying of appendicitis who had had appendectomies years earlier, or of stroke, though their families had seen them, in weekly visits over the years, as placidly feeble-minded souls who would hardly be expected to die of such a cause.

Then, on August 3, 1941, Count Clemens August von Galen, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Münster, proclaimed from his pulpit in St. Lambert's that throughout his Westphalian diocese, on state orders, lists of incurables were being drawn up in hospitals and sanatoria. These people were to be murdered by the government. The first transport from Marienthal, near Münster, had already left the past week. "Woe unto mankind," the bishop continued, "and woe unto the German people, when the holy Commandment of God, 'Thou shalt not kill,' . . . not only is violated, but when this violation is even tolerated and goes unpunished!" Nor did Bishop Galen stop there. With the holy fervor of an Old Testament prophet, he lashed out with example after example of how the Germans under Hitler had flagrantly violated many other Commandments.

The wrathful sermon had an electrifying effect. It was printed and copies were distributed not only to all corners of Germany but among the troops in the field. Many Nazi leaders urged that Galen be hanged. The grey eminence of the Third Reich, Martin Bormann, who had become head of the Party Chancellery after Rudolf Hess's flight to Scotland, argued that such treason deserved nothing less than the death sentence. But Hitler's shrewd propaganda minister, Dr. Josef Goebbels, emphatically demurred, calculating "that the population of Münster could be regarded as lost during the war, if anything were done against the bishop, and in that fear one safely could include the whole of Westphalia." Rather than write off the industrial heartland of Germany for the rest of the war, Hitler swallowed his fury and accepted his impotence—for the time being. Within a month of Galen's sermon the compulsory euthanasia program was halted.

Aside from the fact that his courage saved untold thousands of lives, Cardinal Galen's case is important to an understanding of Hitler. His successful defiance dramatically demonstrated that although the Nazi regime had reached an unprecedented degree of control over the country, there were still very real limits to its power of life and death over the German people. Hitler and Goebbels, despite their hatred and frustration, were well aware of that fact, and accepted it with nothing more than the thought of future vengeance to comfort them.—ED.

* D.T. encourages him in both directions
Yausee, ~~it is not~~ Adolf, what's not
ice-cold, but I am.

1941

The Anatomy of a Dictator 49A

Hitler recalled an embarrassingly distorted picture in which frayed frocks and soiled linen played a role. It was almost as if he were intellectually allergic to Protestantism.

In the final analysis, Hitler's conception of the danger to state and culture represented by Catholics and Protestants was essentially the same. He was very clear about what he planned to do about it: "The worst influence on the people are our pastors of both confessions. I cannot give the answer now, but everything is being entered into my big black book. The time is going to come when I will settle with them without any ceremony, and when that time comes, I have no intention of letting myself be tripped up by any legalistic nets. The only consideration will be what is practical. I am convinced that within ten years everything will look entirely different. There is no way to avoid a basic solution."

This is a clear, stenographically authenticated, and therefore literally accurate statement, which should be the point of departure for any consideration of whether Pope Pius XII and the Catholic Church, as well as the "Confessing" Church (the wing of German Protestantism which did not accept the supervision of Nazi-dominated state ecclesiastical authorities), acted correctly or not during the Third Reich. This statement shows how decisive and brutal their enemy was.

No one will be surprised that the theme of anti-Semitism runs through the *Table Conversations* like a red thread. The *Conversations* offer nothing new here, since Hitler had already expressed himself on the Jews so often. But the *Conversations* do bring out more clearly than other sources the two sides of Hitler's anti-Semitism. On the one hand, he based his argument on allegedly empirical facts conjoined with a pseudo-scientific biological theory. For example, he once said about the children born of mixed marriages between Jews and Gentiles: "Experience proves that after four, five, or six generations, the offspring of these Jews always mendel out' pure Jews again." On the other hand, he let himself be ruled by a Semitophobia which was absolutely grotesque and appalling in its implications. Behind Stalin, he felt, stood the Jew. A small clique of Jews in Sweden had "colossal influence." It was clear to him that "the Roosevelt regime in the U.S.A. is un-

questionably a Jewish organization." And so it went, on and on, firesomely into the night. The only thing that might still evoke some sense of surprise among his table companions would be the startling manner in which an objective analysis would suddenly, as though by a sort of intellectual short-circuit, lead into an outburst against the "international brood of Jewish traders," against the Jewish-dominated world press with its lying blather, or against the alleged activities of the Jews in some other derogatory fashion. No matter what happened in the world, and no matter in what country it happened, Hitler saw the Jew behind it, and especially was this the case if the event involved something unfavorable for Germany. This anti-Semitic mania, or "tic," often prevented Hitler from analyzing a situation objectively in order to decide on a rational course of action. To this extent Hitler was almost like the medieval person who sensed the presence of the devil everywhere. But whereas in the Middle Ages a man might cross himself or—if he had the courage of Luther—hurl the inkpot at Satan, Hitler's mania led to his revenging himself on the millions of Jews who fell into his hands in Germany and the occupied areas of Europe.

Hitler's anti-Semitism had its origins in the early impressions of his youth, but it was reinforced during the five years he spent in Vienna before moving, at the age of twenty-four, to the Bavarian capital of Munich in 1913. Those prewar years in Vienna were, as Hitler himself points out in *Mein Kampf*, the period when the Viennese lower middle classes were organized by the city's anti-Semitic mayor, Karl Lueger, into political shock troops, while the nationalists under Baron von Schönerer also made use of anti-Semitic slogans. Hitler's anti-Semitism was further intensified during the long years of his struggle for power, for its very vehemence understandably provoked Jewish resistance in many forms.⁵ In addition, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, frequently republished

⁵The social and cultural background of Hitler's anti-Semitism is given in Peter G. P. Pulzer's *The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria* (New York, 1964), while the most complete study of Hitler's anti-Semitism in practice is Raul Hilberg's impressive—and appalling—*The Destruction of the European Jews* (Chicago, 1961).—ED.

April 1, 1941

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there only with difficulty. Concern was now stronger than pride in Rome, and cries for help crossed over the Alps as far as the Reich Chancellery in Berlin. Hitler decided that in view of modern long-range aerial warfare we had to wage the war as far from the periphery of the Reich as possible. Therefore [Hitler ordered] help for Africa through Rommel and good mobile armored troops. He wanted no conflict with Greece, so he refused help in Albania. But for the spring of 1941 he ordered that an attack against Greece from Bulgaria be prepared in case this should become necessary after all, or even be forced on us by an English landing in Greece.

There was not much consultation before these decisions. They were unfortunately constrained—as much as Hitler's generals on purely military grounds resisted this commitment of forces to different theaters. For meanwhile the specter of a massive Russian concentration of forces on the eastern borders of Germany and Rumania had taken concrete form, and Hitler was weighing the thought of preventive war. The world has learned from the Nuremberg Trial of many voices that warned against this march [into Russia]. All agree that it was definitely Hitler's idea originally. Both [the fact that the idea originated with Hitler and that he was warned against it] are historical facts. The court judges according to good and evil, world history in terms of correct and false. I will not concern myself here with either of the two judgments, but rather only point out that the danger from the East was seen by all soldiers, and Hitler's concern was shared, more by some, less by others. Opinions differed whether the danger was really so acute and whether it might not have been possible to deal with it by political means. On that question it will be necessary to await a later judgment. Here we are interested only in the influence it had on Hitler's waging of the war, and of that the following can be said: the decision for the campaign against the USSR, Plan "Barbarossa," was his decision and his alone. He did, however, make the final decision only on April 1, 1941. For at this time an event occurred that effectively delayed the beginning of the attack against the almost completely assembled Soviet forces by four to five weeks. For Hitler it was like a beacon that revealed Stalin's intentions.

It was the military *coup* in Belgrade the night after Yugoslavia's

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Appendix II 203 A

accession to the Tripartite Pact.⁵ Hitler was beside himself. He virtually dictated his decisions to the assembled Commanders-in-Chief and the Reich Foreign Minister. He tolerated no discussion of whether the political attitude of the Yugoslavian government should first be clarified diplomatically. So far as he was concerned, Yugoslavia was in league with Russia, prepared to strike us from behind when we marched into Greece, and was trying to establish contact with the English, who at the beginning of March had landed at Piraeus. And as a matter of fact, the Yugoslavian Army did mobilize on the borders. Beginning on April 6, it was overrun by German troops, even though these had very hastily concentrated, and within a few weeks it had reached the point of dissolution—[though these were] the same soldiers who then, only scantily clad, would for years wage a bitter guerrilla war under Tito's leadership, until they were developed into a new Communist army.

The attack on Russia began on June 22 [1941]. The two-front war had been unleashed. It could lead to success only if it were possible to win an annihilating victory over the enemy on one front. This failed by only a little, but that little sufficed, together with the catastrophe of the cold winter, to carry Hitler's train of victories, after having reached this culmination, over onto a declining track. When in 1942 he decided once more to commit all his forces in the attempt to break down the Russian colossus, he was not contradicted in principle by his military advisers; but there were many among them who would rather have seen the second major attack in the North, beginning with the capture of Leningrad, than in the direction of the Caspian Sea. The great apparent success of this campaign ended with the catastrophe on the Don and before Stalingrad. When toward the end of the year Rommel, defeated before the gates of Egypt, fell back on Tripoli as the Allies landed in French North Africa, it was clear not only to the responsible soldiers but to Hitler, himself that the god of war had now turned from Germany and gone over to the other camp. With that, Hitler's activity as a strategist was essentially ended. From then on, he intervened more and more frequently in operational decisions, often down to matters

⁵The German-Italian-Japanese Pact was signed by Yugoslavia on March 25, 1941, followed by the coup on March 27.

D.T. 4 The real question for all of this was whether the god of war was the D.K. or the G.C.

1941

of tactical detail, in order to impose with unbending will what he thought the generals simply refused to comprehend: that one had to stand or fall, that each voluntary step backwards was an evil in itself. Opinions differ as to whether he thereby hastened or delayed the end of the war. One thing only is certain: he could no longer come to a strategic decision. But perhaps there was no longer one to be reached.

He could not surrender. None of the opponents would consider negotiating since agreeing on unconditional surrender as their war-time goal. Therefore what was Hitler to do? He could only fight to the end or seek his own death. Throughout his whole life he had been a fighter, so he chose the first course. Heroism or insanity, opinion throughout the world will always differ on it. Could he not, in order to save his people unnecessary suffering, have come to an earlier end? As a matter of fact, this very thought did concern Hitler during the last days of his life. When he informed me on April 22 [1945] of his decision not to leave Berlin again but to die there, he added: "I should already have made this decision, the most important in my life, in November 1944, and should never have left the headquarters in East Prussia."⁶

But his military advisers—today one often hears it said—should certainly have made it clear to him earlier that the war was lost. What a naive thought! Earlier than any other person in the world, Hitler sensed and knew that the war was lost. But can one give up a Reich and a people before they are lost? A man like Hitler could not do it. He should have fallen in battle rather than taking flight in death, it is said. He wanted to, and he would have done so if he had been physically able. As it was, he did not choose the easier death, but the more certain one. He acted as all heroes in history have acted and will always act.

He had himself buried in the ruins of his Reich and his hopes. May whoever wishes to condemn him for it do so—I cannot.

[Signed:] ALFRED JODL

[The foregoing reflections are complemented by the following pas-

⁶This sentence ends the original statement which Jodl dictated to his defense counsel's wife. The remaining two paragraphs were dictated to his own wife after he was convicted and sentenced to death, as explained in the introductory note.

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even for private businesses. A uniform height had been imposed on all the buildings, as well as on all the store fronts. Skyscrapers, however, were banished from the foreground. Thus we deprived ourselves of all the contrasts essential for animating and loosening the pattern. The entire conception was stamped by a monumental rigidity that would have counteracted all our efforts to introduce urban life into this avenue.

Our happiest concept, comparatively speaking, was the central railroad station, the southern pole of Hitler's grand boulevard. The station, its steel ribbing showing through sheathings of copper and glass, would have handsomely offset the great blocks of stone dominating the rest of the avenue. It provided for four traffic levels linked by escalators and elevators and was to surpass New York's Grand Central Station in size.

State visitors would have descended a large outside staircase. The idea was that as soon as they, as well as ordinary travelers, stepped out of the station they would be overwhelmed, or rather stunned, by the urban scene and thus the power of the Reich. The station plaza, thirty-three hundred feet long and a thousand feet wide, was to be lined with captured weapons, after the fashion of the Avenue of Rams which leads from Karnak to Luxor. Hitler conceived this detail after the campaign in France and came back to it again in the late autumn of 1941, after his first defeats in the Soviet Union.

This plaza was to be crowned by Hitler's great arch or "Arch of Triumph," as he only occasionally called it. Napoleon's Arc de Triomphe on the Place de l'Etoile with its one-hundred-sixty-foot height certainly presents a monumental appearance and provides a majestic terminus to the Champs Elysées. Our triumphal arch, five hundred and fifty feet wide, three hundred and ninety-two feet deep, and three hundred and eighty-six feet high, would have towered over all the other buildings on this southern portion of the avenue and would literally have dwarfed them.

After trying a few times in vain, I no longer had the courage to urge any changes on Hitler. This was the heart of his plan; he had conceived it long before encountering the purifying influence of Professor Troost, and the arch was the classic example of the architectural fantasies he had worked out in his lost sketchbook of the twenties. He remained impervious to all my hints that the monument might be improved by a change of proportions or a simplification of lines and did not demur when on the plans I delicately indicated the

architect by three X's. Everyone would know who the "anonymous" architect was.

Sighting through the two hundred sixty foot opening of the great arch, the arriving traveler would see at the end of a three-mile vista the street's second great triumphal structure rearing out of the haze of the metropolis: the great hall with its enormous dome, described in an earlier chapter.

Eleven separate ministry buildings adorned the avenue between the triumphal arch and the great hall. I had already designed quarters for the ministries of the Interior, Transportation, Justice, Economics, and Food when, after 1941, I was told to include a Colonial Ministry in my plans.³ In other words, even after the invasion of Russia, Hitler was dreaming of acquiring German colonies. The ministers, who hoped that our program would result in concentration of their offices, now distributed throughout Berlin, were disappointed. For by Hitler's decree the new buildings were to serve chiefly for purposes of prestige, not for the housing of the bureaucratic apparatus.

After the monumental central section, the avenue once more resumed its business and entertainment character for a distance of more than half a mile and ended with the round plaza at the intersection with Potsdamer Strasse. Proceeding northward it once more began to be ceremonial. On the right rose Soldiers' Hall, designed by Wilhelm Kreis: a huge cube whose purpose Hitler had never stated frankly, but was probably to be a combination of armory and veterans' memorial. At any rate, after the armistice with France he gave orders that the dining car in which the surrender of Germany had been signed in 1918 and the surrender of France in 1940 was to be brought here as the hall's first exhibit. A crypt was planned for the tombs of celebrated German field marshals of the past, present, and future.⁴ Stretching westward behind the hall as far as Bendlerstrasse were to be the buildings for a new High Command of the Army.⁵

After inspecting these plans Goering felt that his Air Ministry had been demoted. He asked me to be his architect,* and opposite the soldiers' hall, on the edge of the Tiergarten, we found an ideal build-

* Despite my official position as General Inspector of Buildings, Hitler allowed me to design major buildings as a private architect. The general procedure for the reconstruction of Berlin was to call in private architects to design the official buildings as well as the commercial buildings.

ing site for his new building (Reich Marshal held), but Hitler commented like his taking grumbled a courage to persuaded me: "I build it that was Hitler often he overlooked in the Blomberg purpose. He make acid reason concerned The design series of stair than the office imposing hall which would have taken th was a decision I had fir the new Chancellery. An entry Reich Marshal The staircase declared, whe officers of the magniloquence Goering cont spector General rate forever th

This part on the grand on the Tiergarten stipulated as on the top s

cided to cover the roof with thirteen feet of garden soil, which meant that even large trees would have been able to strike root there. Thus I envisioned a two and a half acre roof garden, with swimming pools and tennis courts, fountains, ponds, colonnades, pergolas, and refreshment rooms, and finally a summer theater for two hundred and forty spectators above the roofs of Berlin. Goering was overwhelmed and began raving about the parties he would hold there. "I'll illuminate the great dome with Bengal lights and provide grand fireworks for my guests."

Without the basements, Goering's building would have had a volume of seven hundred and fifty-four thousand cubic yards; the volume of Hitler's newly built Chancellery was only five hundred and twenty thousand cubic yards. Nevertheless, Hitler did not feel that Goering had outstripped him. In that speech of August 1, 1938, in which he disclosed so many of his theories on architecture, Hitler let it be known that according to the great plan for the rebuilding of Berlin the newly completed Chancellery would be used for ten or twelve years. The plan, he said, provided for a residence and seat of government many times larger. After an inspection of Hess's party headquarters in Berlin, Hitler had abruptly decided on the final destiny of the Voss Strasse Chancellery. At Hess's headquarters Hitler was unpleasantly impressed by a stairwell painted a fiery red and furnishings that were considerably plainer and more austere than the ocean-liner style he and the other party and government leaders inclined toward. Back at the Chancellery, Hitler criticized his deputy's taste in no uncertain terms: "Hess is totally unartistic. I must never let him build anything new. After a while he'll receive the present Chancellery as his headquarters, and he won't be allowed to make the slightest changes in it, because he's completely ignorant on such matters." This kind of criticism, especially of a man's aesthetic judgment, could sometimes spell an end to a career, and in the case of Rudolf Hess it was generally so taken. But Hitler never said a word of this to Hess. Hess could only observe that his standing must have fallen by the courtiers' reserved attitude toward him thereafter.

There was to be a huge railroad station to the north as well as to the south of the city. Emerging from it, the visitor would face a basin of water thirty-three hundred feet long and eleven hundred and fifty-five feet wide, across which the great dome was to be seen a mile

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Our caution extended even to details. When we were considering tearing down the tower of the Berlin Town Hall, we launched a trial balloon by having State Secretary Karl Hanke insert a "reader's letter"

Professor Hettlage about our approach expenditures have to way around."¹⁰ As H not be represented as

* According to Rolf 1945 (Berlin, 1954), 12 in 1939.

vided among as many budgets as possible. Every ministry and every government office was to pay for its new quarters out of its individual budget, just as the government railroad system would pay for the modernization of its Berlin installations, and the city of Berlin for streets and subways. Private industry would of course cover its own costs.

By 1938 we had settled these details, and Hitler took some glee in the cunning of it all: "Distributed this way," he commented, "the cost of the whole thing won't attract attention. All that we'll finance ourselves will be the great hall and the triumphal arch. We'll call on the people to make contributions. In addition the Finance Minister is to place 60 million annually at the disposal of your office. Whatever we don't use of this can be put aside for the future." By 1941 I had already accumulated 218 million marks.¹¹ In 1943—the sum had meanwhile increased to three hundred twenty million—the Finance Minister proposed, and I agreed, that the account be quietly dissolved. We never said a word to Hitler about this.

Finance Minister von Schwerin-Krosigk, aghast at this squandering of public funds, repeatedly made objections. Lest these disturb me, Hitler fetched up counter arguments:

If the Finance Minister could realize what a source of income to the state my buildings will be in fifty years! Remember what happened with Ludwig II. Everyone said he was mad because of the cost of his palaces. But today? Most tourists go to Upper Bavaria solely to see them. The entrance fees alone have long since paid for the building costs. Don't you agree? The whole world will come to Berlin to see our buildings. All we need do is tell the Americans how much the Great Hall cost. Maybe we'll exaggerate a bit and say a billion and a half instead of a billion. Then they'll be wild to see the most expensive building in the world.

Each time he sat over the plans he was apt to repeat: "My only wish, Speer, is to live to see these buildings. In 1950 we'll organize a world's fair. Until then the buildings will remain empty, and then they'll serve as exhibition buildings. We'll invite the entire world." That was the way Hitler talked; it was difficult to guess his real thoughts. To console my wife, who saw the next eleven years de-

voted entirely to work, I used her a trip around

Hitler's idea of "shoulders as possible" and increasing more and more government making impressive there had been only window": Unter den new boulevard part of the old prestige tively cheap in this I received many apartments have been scattered after Hitler's access bank had been put had been torn down dinner Himmler pointed had the shape of a viciously a veiled attempt to glorify the Christ to be merely amused

Within a few months before the shifting first available section was assigned to the private companies, other building sites, increased to such a and a half miles west eating sites south of strained Dr. Robert using the enormous tions to buy up a firm own purposes. Even which he planned to

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satisfaction. Thus, for example, I had consulted with the Protestant and Catholic authorities on the location of churches in our new section of Berlin.* Bormann curtly informed me that churches were not to receive building sites.

Hitler's decree of June 25, 1940, for the "preservation of our victory" was tantamount to an order for work to go forward on the buildings in Berlin and Nuremberg. A few days later, however, I made it clear to Reich Minister Lammers that of course we did not "intend to proceed at once with the practical reconstruction of Berlin . . . as long as the war was going on." But Hitler remonstrated and commanded continuance of the building operations even though to do so ran against public feeling. Again on his insistence I set up a "Fuehrer's immediate program," in the light of which Goering—this was in the middle of April 1941—assigned the necessary quantity of iron to me. It amounted to eighty-four thousand tons annually. To camouflage the operation from the public, the program was given the code name "War program for waterways and Reich railways, Berlin section." On April 18, Hitler and I again discussed deadlines: for the completion of the great hall, the High Command of the Armed Forces, the Chancellery, the Fuehrer's building—in short, for his power centers around Adolf Hitler Platz. He was still determined to have that complex erected as quickly as possible. Simultaneously, an association of seven of the best German construction firms was organized for the purpose of speeding the work.

With his characteristic obstinacy and in spite of the impending campaign against the Soviet Union, Hitler personally continued to take a hand in the selection of paintings for the Linz gallery. He sent his art dealers into the occupied areas to comb the picture market there, with the result that there was soon a bitter contest between his dealers and Goering's. The picture war had begun to take a nasty turn when Hitler finally reproved his Reich Marshal and thereby once and for all restored the order of rank even in regard to art dealers.

In 1941 large catalogues bound in brown leather arrived at Obersalzberg. They contained photographs of hundreds of paintings which Hitler personally distributed among his favorite galleries: Linz,

* As yet we had only agreed to compensate the churches for those of their buildings situated in parts of the inner city which were slated for demolition.

→ revolt in the future & destruction
his 1000 year reign.

April '41

1941

Königsberg, Breslau, and other eastern cities. At the Nuremberg Trials, I saw these volumes again as evidence for the prosecution. The majority of the paintings had been seized from Jewish owners by Rosenberg's Paris office.

Hitler made no inroads on the famous state art collections of France. However, this restraint was not so unselfish as it seemed, for he occasionally remarked that in a peace treaty the best pieces from the Louvre would have to be delivered to Germany as part of war reparations. But Hitler did not utilize his authority for his private ends. He did not keep in his own possession a single one of the paintings acquired or confiscated in the occupied territories.

Goering, on the other hand, went about increasing his art collection during the war by any means whatsoever. The halls and rooms of Karinhall were sheathed with valuable paintings hung one above the other in three and four tiers. He even had a life-size nude representing Europa mounted above the canopy of his magnificent bed. He himself also dabbled in art dealing: The walls of one large hall of his country estate were covered with paintings. They had been the personal property of a well-known Dutch art dealer who after the occupation had been compelled to turn over his collection to Goering for a ridiculous price. In the middle of the war Goering sold these pictures to Gauleiters, as he told me with a childlike smile, for many times what he had paid—adding, moreover, an extra something to the price for the glory of the paintings having come “from the famous Goering collection.”

One day—it must have been sometime in 1943—I heard from a French intermediary that Goering was pressing the Vichy government to exchange a famous painting belonging to the Louvre for several of the worthless pictures in his own collection. Knowing Hitler's views about the inviolability of the Louvre's collection, I was able to advise the French informant not to yield to this pressure; if Goering should persist in the matter, he was to let me know. Goering, however, let it drop. On the other hand, one day at Karinhall he showed me the Sterzing Altar, which had been presented to him by Mussolini after the agreement on South Tyrol in the winter of 1940. Hitler was often outraged by the way the “Second Man in the State” appropriated valuable works of art, but he never dared call Goering to account.

Toward the end of the war Goering invited my friend Breker and

me to afternoon occasion. The me: when at its end a ring's servant pou bottle. “This is re barrasmment to hi palace in which th expansive mood, Karinhall cellar, from the Naples 1 uation of Naples : ship he had his cu of French soaps a years. At the conc diamonds and oth thousands of mark

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June '41

cepted the criticisms without demur. Posse rejected most of the pictures by painters of Hitler's beloved Munich School.

In the middle of November 1940, Molotov arrived in Berlin. Hitler and his dinner guests greatly relished the tale carried by his physician, Dr. Karl Brandt, that the Soviet Foreign Minister's staff had all plates and silverware boiled before use for fear of German germs.

In the salon at the Berghof stood a large globe on which, a few months later, I found traces of this unsuccessful conference. One of the army adjutants pointed out, with a significant look, an ordinary pencil line: a line running from north to south along the Urals. Hitler had drawn it to indicate the future boundary between his sphere of interest and that of the Japanese. On June 21, 1941, the eve of the attack on the Soviet Union, Hitler called me into his Berlin salon after dinner, had a record put on and a few bars from Liszt's *Les Préludes* played. "You'll hear that often in the near future, because it is going to be our victory fanfare for the Russian campaign. Funk chose it. How do you like it?" . . . We'll be getting our granite and marble from there, in any quantities we want."

Hitler was now openly manifesting his megalomania. What his building plans had been implying for years was now to be sealed "in blood," as he put it, by a new war. Aristotle once wrote in the *Politics*: "It remains true that the greatest injustices proceed from those who pursue excess, not from those who are driven by necessity."

For Ribbentrop's fiftieth birthday in 1943 several of his close associates presented him with a handsome casket, ornamented with semi-precious stones, which they intended to fill with photocopies of all the treaties and agreements concluded by the Foreign Minister. "We were thrown into great embarrassment," Ambassador Hewel, Ribbentrop's liaison man, remarked to Hitler at supper, "when we were about to fill the casket. There were only a few treaties that we hadn't broken in the meantime."

Hitler's eyes filled with tears of laughter.

As had happened at the beginning of the war, I was again oppressed by the idea of pushing forward with such vast building opera-

* For each of the previous campaigns Hitler had personally chosen a musical fanfare that preceded radio announcements of striking victories.

tions, drawing upon obviously reaching a man advance in Ru Dr. Todt, who was industry, that work the war effort.⁴ Tod favorable state of n more before facing ti together, for my arg. He would not hear o terial and labor for than he would cons autobahns, the party

In the middle of was already lagging. Hitler ordered sizable from Sweden, Norwa buildings. Contracts been awarded to the Italian, Belgian, Sw bring these vast qua founded (on June 4, our own shipyards in sand boats with a car,

My proposals tha disregarded even wh 1941 in Russia bega told me bluntly: "I still going on. I am n ing my plans."⁵

After the initial su we wanted even mor to be supplied by ca stals. On August 20, Admiral Lorey, com to place thirty piece station and the triu it). There were oth

Nov '41

tions, drawing upon all available means, when the great war was obviously reaching a crucial stage. On July 30, 1941—while the German advance in Russia was still proceeding boldly—I proposed to Dr. Todt, who was in charge of the entire German construction industry, that work be suspended on all buildings not essential for the war effort.⁴ Todt, however, thought that in view of the present favorable state of military operations we could wait a few weeks more before facing this question. The question was to be deferred altogether, for my arguments once again made no impression on Hitler. He would not hear of any restrictions and refused to divert the material and labor for his private buildings to war industries any more than he would consider calling a halt to his favorite projects, the autobahns, the party buildings, and the Berlin projects.

In the middle of September 1941, when the advance in Russia was already lagging considerably behind the overconfident forecasts, Hitler ordered sizable increases in our contracts for granite purchases from Sweden, Norway, and Finland for my big Berlin and Nuremberg buildings. Contracts to the value of thirty million Reichsmarks had been awarded to the leading companies in the Norwegian, Finnish, Italian, Belgian, Swedish, and Dutch stone industry.⁵ In order to bring these vast quantities of granite to Berlin and Nuremberg, we founded (on June 4, 1941) a transport fleet of our own and set up our own shipyards in Wismar and Berlin, with plans to build a thousand boats with a cargo capacity of five hundred tons each.

My proposals that we cease peacetime building continued to be disregarded even when the outlines of the disaster of the winter of 1941 in Russia began to be apparent. On November 29, 1941, Hitler told me bluntly: "The building must begin even while this war is still going on. I am not going to let the war keep me from accomplishing my plans."⁶

After the initial successes in Russia, moreover, Hitler decided that we wanted even more martial accents for our boulevard. These were to be supplied by captured enemy armaments set up on granite pedestals. On August 20, 1941, on Hitler's orders, I informed an astonished Admiral Lorey, commander of the Berlin armory, that we intended to place thirty pieces of captured heavy artillery between the south station and the triumphal arch ("Structure T," as we privately called it). There were other points, I informed the admiral, on the grand

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Ever since I had begun, at the beginning of the war, to assume responsibility for erecting buildings for the army and air force, I had considerably expanded the organization entrusted with this work. To be sure, by the standards of a few months hence, the twenty-six thousand construction workers employed on these military programs by the end of 1941 would be insignificant. But at this time I was proud of being able to make a small contribution to the war effort; it eased my conscience not to be engaged entirely on Hitler's peacetime plans. The most pressing task was the Ju 88 Program for the air force, which was to turn out the new two-motored, medium-range Junkers 88 dive bombers. Three big factories in Brünn, Graz, and Vienna, each of them larger than the Volkswagen plant, were completed within eight months. For the first time we used prefabricated concrete elements. From the autumn of 1941 on, however, our work was hampered by the shortage of fuel. Even though our programs had top priority, in September 1941 the amounts of fuel assigned to them had to be reduced by a third, and by January 1, 1942, to a sixth of our needs.⁹ That is just one example of how greatly Hitler had overextended his resources by embarking on the Russian campaign.

Along with this, repair of the bomb damage in Berlin and the building of air-raid shelters had been turned over to me. Without suspecting it, I was thus preparing for my duties as Minister of Armaments. For one thing, this gave me some insight into the havoc wreaked on the mechanisms of production by the constant arbitrary shifts in programs and priorities. For another thing, it taught me a good deal about the power relationships and the dissensions within the leadership.

For example, I took part in a session with Goering in the course of which General Thomas expressed his anxieties about the vast demands the leadership was making upon the economy. Goering answered the respected general by roaring at him: "What business is that of yours? I am handling that—I am, do you hear. Or are you by any chance in charge of the Four-Year Plan? You have nothing to say in this matter; the Fuehrer has entrusted all these questions to me alone." In such disputes General Thomas could expect no support from his chief, General Keitel, who was only too glad to escape being bullied by Goering. The well-conceived economic plan of the Armaments Office of the High Command of the Armed Forces was never carried out. But as I had already realized by then, Goering did nothing

Nov '41

about these problems. Whenever he did do anything, he usually created total confusion, since he never took the trouble to work through the problems but made his decisions on the basis of impulsive inspirations.

A few months later, around November 1941, in my capacity as chief of armaments construction I took part in a conversation between Field Marshal Milch and Dr. Todt. In the autumn of 1941, Hitler was convinced that the Russians were already defeated; he therefore wanted priority to be given to building up the air force in preparation for his next operation, the subjugation of England.* Milch now insisted on this priority, as was his duty—while Dr. Todt, who knew something about the military situation, was close to despair. For he too was responsible for increasing the equipment of the army as fast as possible, but lacked an order from Hitler which would have given his assignment the necessary priority. At the end of the conference Todt summed up his helplessness: "It would be best, sir, if you'd take me into your ministry and let me be your assistant."

It was again in the fall of 1941 that I visited the Junkers plant in Dessau to see General Manager Koppenberg and discuss how to coordinate our building programs with his production plans. After we had worked the matter out, he led me into a locked room and showed me a graph comparing American bomber production for the next several years with ours. I asked him what our leaders had to say about these depressing comparative figures. "That's just it, they won't believe it," he said. Whereupon he broke into uncontrollable tears. But Goering, the Commander in Chief of the then heavily engaged Luftwaffe, had plenty of leisure. On June 23, 1941, the day after the beginning of the attack on the Soviet Union, he found time to dress in his gala uniform and come with me to see the models of his Reich Marshal's office, which were being exhibited in Treptow.

My last art tour for a quarter of a century took me to Lisbon, where on November 8 an exhibit of new German architecture was

* This order of Hitler's was still in effect in December 1941, although the situation had changed radically. Hitler hesitated to withdraw such orders, partly because he had a general tendency to hesitate and partly because he was concerned about saving face. A new order consistent with the exigencies of the war, giving army equipment priority over air force equipment, as required by the circumstances, was not issued until January 10, 1942.

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Because of this trip acquaintances, among at my invitation had. They must have looked buildings that were word about the impact met them during my times helped them had more freedom than the Salon d'Automne with pictures which many. Hitler, too, haphazard as it was logical soundness of the French All the better for us."

While I was on my developed behind the man military organization winter. Moreover, the systematically wiped and other technical ap

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being opened. I was supposed to fly in Hitler's plane; but when it appeared that some of the alcoholic members of his entourage, such as Adjutant Schaub and the photographer Hoffmann, wanted to go along on the flight, I shook off their company by proposing to Hitler that I drive to Lisbon in my car. I saw ancient cities such as Burgos, Segovia, Toledo, and Salamanca; I visited the Escorial, a complex I could compare only to Hitler's Fuehrer palace in its proportions, although the underlying impulse was quite different and far more spiritual: Philip II had surrounded the palace nucleus with a monastery. What a contrast with Hitler's architectural ideas: in the one case, remarkable conciseness and clarity, magnificent interior rooms, their forms perfectly controlled; in the other case, pomp and disproportionate ostentation. Moreover, this rather melancholic creation by the architect Juan de Herrera (1530-97) more closely matched our ominous situation than Hitler's boastful program music. In hours of solitary contemplation it began to dawn on me for the first time that my recent architectural ideals were on the wrong track.

Because of this trip I missed the visit to Berlin of several Parisian acquaintances, among them Blaminck, Derain, and Despiau,¹⁰ who at my invitation had come to see the models of our plans for Berlin. They must have looked in dead silence at our project and at the buildings that were going up; the office journal does not record a word about the impression that our exhibit made on them. I had met them during my stays in Paris and through my office had several times helped them out with commissions. Curiously enough, they had more freedom than their German colleagues. For when I visited the Salon d'Automne in Paris during the war, the walls were hung with pictures which would have been branded degenerate art in Germany. Hitler, too, had heard of this show. His reaction was as surprising as it was logical: "Are we to be concerned with the intellectual soundness of the French people? Let them degenerate if they want to! All the better for us."

While I was on my trip to Lisbon, a transportation disaster had developed behind the fronts in the eastern theater of war. The German military organization had been unable to cope with the Russian winter. Moreover, the Soviet troops in the course of their retreat had systematically wiped out all locomotive sheds, watering stations, and other technical apparatus of their railroad system. In the intoxica-

time I felt that here was one dangerous flaw in Hitler's system. For unlike the democratic regimes, there could be no public criticism; no demand could arise that these abuses be corrected. On March 19, 1945, in my last letter to Hitler, I reminded him of this tendency: "I was sore at heart in the victorious days of 1940 when I saw how we were losing, among a broad spectrum of our leadership, our inner discipline. That was the very time when we ought to have proved our worthiness to Providence by decency and inner modesty."

Though these lines were written five years later, they confirm the fact that at the time I saw the mistakes, winced at the abuses, took a critical stand, and was tormented by doubts and skepticism. But I must admit that these feelings were born from my fear that Hitler and his leadership might gamble away the victory.

In the middle of 1941, Goering inspected our model city on Pariser Platz. In a moment of affability he made an unusual remark to me: "I have told the Fuehrer," he said, "that I consider you, after him, the greatest man Germany possesses." But as second man in the hierarchy he felt he had better qualify this statement: "In my eyes you are absolutely the greatest architect. I would like to say that I esteem you as highly for your architectural creativity as I do the Fuehrer for his political and military abilities."¹¹

After nine years as Hitler's architect I had worked my way up to an admired and uncontested position. The next three years were to confront me with entirely different tasks which for a time actually made me the most important man after Hitler.

mis, Jan '41

technological backgrounds. We loved nature, life in alpine shelters, ski tours—and shared a strong dislike for Bormann. Todt had repeatedly had serious run-ins with Bormann, protesting against his despoiling the landscape around Obersalzberg. My wife and I had frequently been Todt's house guests; the Todts lived in a small unpretentious place off the beaten track on Hintersee near Berchtesgaden. No one would have guessed that the famous road builder and creator of the autobahns lived there.

Dr. Todt was one of the very few modest, unassertive personalities in the government, a man you could rely on, and who steered clear of all the intrigues. With his combination of sensitivity and matter-of-factness, such as is frequently found in technicians, he fitted rather poorly into the governing class of the National Socialist state. He lived a quiet, withdrawn life, having no personal contacts with party circles—and even very rarely appeared at Hitler's dinners and suppers, although he would have been welcome. This retiring attitude enhanced his prestige; whenever he did appear he became the center of interest. Hitler, too, paid him and his accomplishments a respect bordering on reverence. Nevertheless, Todt had maintained his personal independence in his relations with Hitler, although he was a loyal party member of the early years.

In January 1941, when I was having difficulties with Bormann and Giessler, Todt wrote me an unusually candid letter which revealed his own resigned approach to the working methods of the National Socialist leadership:

Perhaps my own experiences and bitter disappointments with all the men with whom I should actually be cooperating might be of help to you, enabling you to regard your experience as conditioned by the times, and perhaps the point of view which I have gradually arrived at after much struggle might somewhat help you psychologically. For I have concluded that in the course of such events . . . every activity meets with opposition, everyone who acts has his rivals and unfortunately his opponents also. But not because people want to be opponents, rather because the tasks and relationships force different people to take different points of view. Perhaps, being young, you have quickly discovered how to cut through all such bother, while I only brood over it.¹

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man. Then I'll have the Transportation Minister come here separately."

On Hitler's instructions both men were put up at headquarters in different barracks, and Dr. Ganzenmüller entered Hitler's office without knowing what awaited him. There are minutes of Hitler's remarks which were made the same day:

The transportation problem is crucial; therefore it must be solved. All my life, but more so than ever in the past winter, I have confronted crucial questions that had to be solved. So-called experts and men who by rights should have been leaders repeatedly told me: "That isn't possible, that won't do!" I cannot resign myself to such talk! There are problems that absolutely have to be solved. Where real leaders are present, these problems always are solved and always will be solved. This cannot be done by pleasant methods. Pleasantness is not what counts for me; in the same way, it is a matter of complete indifference to me what posterity will say about the methods I have been compelled to use. For me there is only a single question that must be solved: We must win the war or Germany faces annihilation.

Hitler went on to recount how he had pitted his will against the disaster of the past winter and against the generals who urged retreat. From this, he made a slight jump to the transport problem and mentioned some of the measures which I had earlier recommended to him as necessary if order were to be restored to the railways. Without calling in the Minister of Transportation, who was now waiting outside, also ignorant of what this was all about, he appointed Ganzenmüller the new state secretary in the Transportation Ministry because "he has proved at the front that he possesses the energy to restore order to the muddled transportation situation." Only at this point were Minister of Transportation Dorpmüller and his assistant, Ministerial Director Leibbrandt, brought into the conference. He had decided, Hitler announced, to intervene in the transportation situation, since victory depended on it. Then he continued with one of his standard arguments: "In my day I started with nothing, an obscure soldier in the World War, and began my career only when all others, who seemed more destined to leadership than I, failed. The whole course of my life proves that I never capitulate. The tasks of the war must be mastered. I repeat: For me the word 'impossible' does not

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shown him and his staff much blood. But Hitler had the army from their inter and its road con- had to live in holes in quipped, exhausted and been shattered. At the up to full strength, and e pushed about on the n previous fighting and r, Hitler frequently set since he invariably orments came under fire power to bear. The result

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was that the men were led piecemeal up to the enemy and slowly annihilated.

The communications apparatus at headquarters was remarkable for that period. It was possible to communicate directly with all the important theaters of war. But Hitler overestimated the merits of the telephone, radio, and teletype. For thanks to this apparatus the responsible army commanders were robbed of every chance for independent action, in contrast to earlier wars. Hitler was constantly intervening on their sectors of the front. Because of this communications apparatus individual divisions in all the theaters of war could be directed from Hitler's table in the situation room. The more fearful the situation, the greater was the gulf modern technology created between reality and the fantasies with which the man at this table operated.

Military leadership is primarily a matter of intelligence, tenacity, and iron nerves. Hitler thought he had all these qualities in far greater measure than his generals. Again and again he predicted, although only after the disaster of the winter of 1941-42, that even the worst situations could be overcome and, indeed, that only in such situations would he prove how firmly he stood and how sound his nerves were.*

Such remarks were scarcely complimentary toward the officers present; but Hitler was often capable of turning to the General Staff officers of his entourage and insulting them directly. He would tell them that they were not steadfast, that they were always wanting to retreat, that they were prepared to give up ground without any reason. These cowards on the General Staff would never have dared to start a war, he would say; they had always advised against it, always maintained that our forces were far too weak. But who had been proved right, if not himself! He would run down the usual list of earlier military successes and review the negative attitudes of the General Staff before these operations began—which produced a ghostly impression, given the situation that had meanwhile arisen. In going over the past

6 days after the assassination attempt
*On July 26, 1944, Hitler boasted to the heads of industry: "All I know is that unprecedentedly strong nerves and unprecedented resolution are necessary if a leader is to survive in times such as these and make decisions which concern our very existence. . . . Any other man in my place would have been unable to do what I have done; his nerves would not have been strong enough."

Winkler 41-42

July 26, 1944

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send for Goebbels. Goebbels told his diary that *he* had prior engagements.³¹ The erosion of his influence is plain from a bleak entry ten days later, after Otto Dietrich had once again put his nose out of joint. 'I may now have to appeal to the Führer,' he wrote, 'awkward though that may prove for me right now.'³² And then there was the war department (O.K.H.): they had borrowed Goebbels' best film technicians to make their movie *Victory in the West*; now they refused to let him have them back—another indicator of his momentary impotence.³³ For the first time in years he stayed away from the party's foundation ceremony in Munich on February 24; he listened to Hitler's speech on the radio, a peculiar sensation, he admitted, without being more explicit about their estrangement.³⁴

ASSUREDLY it is Magda who is causing his problems with Hitler. Goebbels treats her more scandalously than ever. Her father, his life slowly ebbing in Duisburg, sends to Magda and her mother Auguste Behrend a Christmas telegram which studiously omits all mention of Dr Joseph Goebbels. When she visits the city hospital, her dying father has to send her three hundred marks to defray her travel expenses.³⁵ On April 3, 1941, Magda returns to Duisburg to share her father's last hours on earth. Her sorrow leaves Goebbels stone cold. 'I scarcely know him,' he callously observes in his diary, not caring who may read it later, 'and I shall not be losing anything when he goes.'³⁶

What else has caused the friction? A terse line in his diary for December 20, 1940 refers to a 'short parlay' with Magda—his euphemism for a blazing row—between two air-raid alerts.³⁷ The likely cause is as much the reappearance of Karl Hanke, now a bemedalled war hero of thirty-eight, as the arrival at Schwanenwerder early in November of the vivacious young Ursula Quandt, who has just divorced Magda's boring and half-blind stepson Herbert Quandt. Ursula, nearly a generation younger than Magda, 'now looks quite delicious,' as Goebbels candidly observes.³⁸ His diary mentions her no fewer than thirty-nine times in the next six months. Over Christmas 1940 Magda finds that he has invited Ursula out to Lanke too, with his young adjutant Herbert Heiduschke, a paratrooper, for the sake of appearances.³⁹ At the New Year he pulls the same stunt. The threesome are inseparable for the rest of January, even traveling together to Vienna.⁴⁰

Even in the handwritten diaries the clues about his relationships with women are so urbane as to be almost invisible. He records the curious fact that their nanny has 'quite unexpectedly' given birth to a child. 'Nobody,' he informs his diary, 'had the slightest idea. I arrange for the scared creature to be taken care of. She has suffered fear and pain enough.'⁴¹ 'I discussed with Mrs — her future work,' he writes a few weeks later. 'She's expecting a child now.'⁴² For a married woman this would not normally excite comment. Seven weeks later, just before Barbarossa, he records this episode: 'A baby in a flower-covered perambulator is put into the ministry's entrance hall for me. With an anony-

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mous letter asking me to show an interest in the baby. I shall concern myself with it. I shall first try to find the mother.^{43*}

If Magda has indeed sought comfort with Hanke, it does not last long.⁴⁴ Goebbels prevails on Hitler to banish him from Berlin. The Führer splits Silesia's administration in two: Hanke becomes gauleiter and Oberpräsident of his native Lower Silesia.⁴⁵ Arriving for supper with Hitler on the day after this arrangement is announced, Goebbels finds Hanke there as well. 'I cut him dead,' he records—four words that say it all.⁴⁶

Even now strange events cast a shadow over his family, which the diary cannot entirely conceal. Magda leaves for a five-week cure in Dresden.⁴⁷ All six children leave at the same time. Life in Berlin's air-raid shelters and the indifferent diet are blighting their growth, writes Goebbels, and Göring has offered them sanctuary in his villa on the Obersalzberg.⁴⁸ Midst much weeping Goebbels sees his entire family, with baby Heide in her little basket, leave at ten A.M. on February 12, 1941. True, nearly one thousand trainloads of other children have been evacuated from Berlin, but as Churchill's raids have momentarily declined other parents are clamoring for their return; besides, Lanke, so expensively built, is hardly at greater risk than the Obersalzberg, and the comely young divorcee Ursula Quandt has no qualms about staying out there at Goebbels' forest estate.⁴⁹

He is no stranger to what he calls the sexual problems of men and women forced to live apart.⁵⁰ He feigns dismay at being 'all alone' in the big house at No. 20 Hermann-Göring Strasse, but all that empty it is not. 'Chatted Ursula up a teeny bit,' he records, 'then off to bed exhausted.'⁵¹

From her sanitarium Magda writes him a long letter about her visit to Hitler when she left the children at the Göring villa.⁵² Goebbels tells his staff that Hitler, followed by an inquisitive Bormann, has led her aside, asked, 'Has the Doctor come to his senses?', and then silently squeezed her hand.⁵³ Goebbels motors out to Lanke for a week to read, to ride through the forest in his splendid new carriage with the 'nice, naïve,' and 'unproblematic' Ursula, and to listen to classical music.⁵⁴ At the end of that week another letter comes from Magda, who has had another mild heart attack. 'Now,' he triumphs, 'she is nice and affectionate to me.'⁵⁵

She pleads for him to visit, and he does spend one evening in Dresden (with Ursula) listening to her wifely prattle—'It is all very nice and harmonious,' he records, another of those give-away phrases like the 'Ursula looks gorgeous' that he writes after a stroll around the gardens at No. 20.⁵⁶ When Ursula is away for two weeks visiting the children Goebbels entertains the occasional actress like Margit Symms, a Hungarian beauty; 'helped her career a bit,' he notes afterward.⁵⁷

Magda returns to Berlin on March 22. She has arranged for their

*The diary does not mention any of these episodes again. Visiting Buenos Aires in October 1991 the author was informed that an illegitimate son of Goebbels was living there.

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children to be billeted at Bischofswiesen in Salzburg's countryside.⁵⁸ At the end of the month both she and Ursula have competition with the arrival of Marina Shalyapin, a good-looking Russian émigrée with fascinating tales of the 1917 bolshevik revolution to tell. The little Doctor spends three weeks flirting with her, especially when Magda goes down to Dessau to say good-bye to Harald, who is off to the Balkan wars.⁵⁹ All three women come to Lanke for Easter—'A turbulent Easter,' records Goebbels.⁶⁰ On the last day of April Magda leaves, taking Ursula with her, to transfer the six children to a large summer house on a lake near Bad Aussee, on the Upper Danube. 'They are to stay there,' explained Goebbels, 'until the war is over.'⁶¹

HE forbade all prophecies about when that might be. 'As for Messrs Sperrle and Stumpff,' he said, expressing his fury at two of the Luftwaffe's most indolent commanders, 'they are in for a surprise. The war game isn't child's play after all.'⁶²

The present lull in the war, he had privately explained on January 9 to the foreign journalists, opening their new press club on Leipziger Platz, was just a 'creative pause.'⁶³ In fact the 1941 hunting season for Hitler's bombers and submarines had not yet begun.⁶⁴ By February 6 he knew of Hitler's plans to evict the British expeditionary force currently disembarking in Greece.⁶⁵ 'It is high time,' he wrote in *Das Reich*, 'for London to begin listening to harsh facts.'⁶⁶ He again began to hint at a coming invasion of England.⁶⁷ 'Hitherto,' he teased foreign journalists on March 7, 'we have never set dates. . . . Now for the first time in his political career the Führer has mentioned one, namely: "The decision will come this year."⁶⁸ In the privacy of his diary however he admitted it was fraud. 'For England's benefit we're putting on a bit of an act on the subject of invasion,' he explained, 'to get them all worked up and permanently in a state of fright.'⁶⁹

Febr 6

WHEN Hitler returned to Berlin on March 15, 1941 something still kept the two men apart. 'I am far too rushed to see him,' was Dr Goebbels' lame excuse to his diary.⁷⁰ He saw him at a distance the next day, speaking at the Memorial Day ceremony. Goebbels was impressed by the confidence he voiced in victory, but it perplexed him that Hitler was still careful not to state that the war would end in 1941.⁷¹

March 15

He was of course still unaware of Barbarossa; he still believed, after an exchange of views with General Eugen von Schobert, that the general's Eleventh Army, stationed on the eastern frontier, was covering Germany's rear.⁷²

Hitler finally invited him round to the chancellery on the seventeenth. 'We are slowly strangling Britain,' he told Goebbels, describing their now resumed submarine and air attacks. 'One day she'll lie croaking on the ground.'⁷³ Not above a bit of crude influence-buying, Goebbels on his next visit to Hitler offered him twenty million marks for his social and

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cultural funds, from the Winter Relief and film industry purses which he controlled.⁷⁴

At some stage now Hitler did finally brief him on Barbarossa. Perhaps it was on March 20, because the next morning Goebbels requested that all Russian journalists be kept under close surveillance.⁷⁵ Moreover, hearing of the friendly reception accorded by Moscow to Japan's foreign minister Yosuke Matsuoka on his way to Berlin the minister commented, 'I don't trust the bolsheviks.'⁷⁶ After attending Hitler's banquet for the Japanese minister on March 28 Goebbels handwrote this explicit diary entry:

[After Yugoslavia] the biggest operation will then follow: Against R. It is being meticulously concealed, only a very few are in the know. It will be initiated with massive west-bound troop movements. We divert attention every which way, except to the east. A feint invasion operation is to be prepared against England, then like lightning everything goes back [east] and up and at 'em. The Ukraine is one vast granary.

Psychologically, he admitted, there were obvious drawbacks—for example the fate of Napoleon's Grand Army. Propaganda would get around that by playing the anti-bolshevik melody. What a challenge! 'We're going to pull off our masterpiece,' he bragged in the diary. 'Great victories lie in store. It all calls for steady nerves and a clear head. . . . It's great to be in on it,' he added, a hint that it still irked him that Hitler had kept him out of the inner circle for so many months.⁷⁷

On the day that Berlin welcomed Matsuoka, the Yugoslav government which had just joined the Axis was overthrown in a coup funded by the British secret service.⁷⁸ To Goebbels, seeing him at the banquet in Matsuoka's honor, Hitler had seemed under a lot of strain. The Führer told him afterwards that he had decided to deal with Yugoslavia at once. For several days anti-German demonstrations rocked Belgrade. Goebbels allowed his newspapers to publish reports on them without any comment other than, as he put it, a few choice drops of poison. On April 4 his black transmitters went into action, broadcasting in all the regional dialects, promising everybody autonomy if Yugoslavia were destroyed.⁷⁹ He was already choosing the Balkan victory fanfare.⁸⁰

Looking at the clock over dinner on April 5 he revealed to his closest staff that Germany's bomber squadrons were already being fueled for the attack on Belgrade.⁸¹ At one A.M. Hitler sent for him; he wanted company. Three hundred bombers, he said, would smash Belgrade at daybreak, followed by three hundred more the next night. 'We're going to smoke out this nest of Serbian plotters,' noted Goebbels, aping Hitler's language. The Führer said he would prosecute this war without pity. They sat sipping tea until precisely five-twenty, the hour appointed for the attack, then Hitler retired to bed.⁸² 'The Führer himself,' Goebbels told his senior staff at eleven o'clock that morning, 'estimates the duration of this whole operation at two months, I myself think it may well be shorter.' As

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for Moscow's response, Goebbels reassured his staff. 'Russia will think twice before poking her fingers into this blaze,' he suggested. 'She'll stand aside clenching her fists with rage, and watch what happens next. You know the Führer's methods. Today and tonight a judgment is being inflicted on Belgrade on such a scale that for a thousand kilometers all round people will say, "Stand back! Don't get involved!" And that's the object of the exercise.'⁸³

Seventeen thousand were killed in the air raids on Belgrade.⁸⁴ There was worldwide outrage; when Churchill bombed Berlin on April 10, damaging the university, state library, and state opera house, Goebbels was perversely pleased as he could use this raid to offset the bombing of Belgrade. The British claimed to have killed three thousand Berliners; he kept quiet—the real total was fifteen.⁸⁵

Later that month Churchill started dropping huge four-thousand pound bombs on Berlin—'blockbusters,' they were called. 'That makes the future look pretty bleak,' Goebbels admitted.⁸⁶ He remarked to Hitler that if anything the air raids were making their own public even more refractory.⁸⁷ Neither paused to consider that the Luftwaffe's raids might be having the same effect on the English public. After violent raids on Kiel, since Göring's officials failed, Goebbels took charge of relief measures himself, ordering the evacuation of women and children and the construction of shelters, and rushing furniture and clothing to the blitzed naval base.⁸⁸ At Emden he did the same. These were in fact his first overt steps in the drive to become Germany's next dictator.

FOR Hitler's concurrent campaign in Greece Goebbels planned a two-tier propaganda policy. For domestic consumption, the British expeditionary force in Greece was to be described as powerful; but abroad it was to be mocked as puny and ineffective.⁸⁹ Moreover, since it was in Germany's strategic interest to detain and destroy the British there, Goebbels publicly accused Churchill of planning to do a bunk.⁹⁰ 'We have to pillory Churchill as a typical gambler,' he said on April 15, explaining his tactics to his morning conference, 'more at home in the gambling salons of Monte Carlo . . . cynical, ruthless, and brutal, spilling the blood of others so as to spare the blood of the British.' If the B.B.C. now announced that Churchill was pouring reinforcements into Greece, he said, their response must be: 'Lies, all lies! It's not true, it's just a cowardly fraud perpetrated by Mr Churchill. Our own precise observations clearly prove that the British are taking to their heels.' And if London's Reuters agency now referred to the British as 'taking up new positions,' then German propaganda must taunt: 'These new positions consist of the troop transports in which the British are planning their getaway.'⁹¹ Soon the world's press was resounding with the insults which he had dictated at conferences like these.

His orthodox propaganda capabilities within Greece were strictly limited. There were only 37,000 radio sets in the entire country.⁹² Besides, the Greeks were never Hitler's enemy. Had the British not sent in their

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troops, he twice told his propaganda minister, he would have happily left his Italian allies to stew in their own juice.⁹³ Now, as the Germans drove the British forces once more back toward the coast, Churchill lapsed into a brooding silence. Goebbels heard that he was seeking solace in whisky and cigars. 'Just the kind of opponent we need,' he observed.⁹⁴ By the last day of April the British had all left, aboard troop transports bound for Crete and elsewhere.

'First,' wrote Goebbels, 'a short breather, and then the grand slam.'⁹⁵

Until now he had kept his knowledge of Barbarossa strictly to himself. On April 10, 1941 he secretly directed Dr Taubert to resuscitate his anti-Comintern staff.⁹⁶ Taubert's eastern department eventually became a huge body with eight hundred employees running the radio, press, film, and cultural life of the occupied territories except the Government-General (as occupied Poland was now called), with a vaguely anti-Moscow-centralism, antisemitic line.⁹⁷

That rainy Easter weekend, Goebbels took a few colleagues out to Lanke. 'How do you think,' he suddenly asked, strolling along the boardwalk around the little Bogensee, 'the German people are going to react to a war with Moscow?' Without waiting for the answer he continued: It would be their ministry's most gargantuan propaganda feat ever. For fifteen years they had demonized the Russians. Then Hitler had signed his pact with Stalin. 'If we do another about-face,' he pointed out, 'nobody is ever going to believe us again.'⁹⁸

Goebbels heard a few days later that Stalin, standing on the Moscow railroad platform for Matsuoka's onward journey to Japan, had hugged the German military attaché Krebs and loudly promised eternal friendship. 'Splendid,' commented the minister. 'Stalin evidently doesn't want to make the acquaintance of our panzer divisions either.'⁹⁹ Before leaving Moscow, Matsuoka signed a Japanese-Soviet non-aggression treaty. 'That doesn't suit the Führer one bit,' Goebbels observed. 'Not given the ongoing planning.'¹⁰⁰

? on the evening of April 18 the High Command's liaison officer Major Hans-Leo Martin gate-crashed the little birthday party that Goebbels was staging for his mother in Hermann-Göring Strasse, took him aside, and said: 'Herr Reichsminister, I have been instructed to inform you that our Wehrmacht is shortly to attack Russia.'¹⁰¹ Goebbels' face revealed not a flicker of emotion.

He had neither compunctions nor fears about the operation. He shortly quoted in his diary this facile assessment as stated by Hitler: 'The entire fabric of bolshevism will collapse like a house of cards.'¹⁰² Summing up the Balkan campaign in the Reichstag a few days later, Hitler spoke for the first time of the possibility that the war would continue into 1942. The public was dismayed. Goebbels however was already discussing the new fanfare for Russia with his radio bosses.¹⁰³

Returning from the dockyards at Gotenhafen (formerly Gdynia) and Danzig where he had inspected the mighty new battleships Bismarck and

Tirpitz, Hitler Churchill was of defeats. 'Wi Franco might hands. Then ' doesn't bear dropping like : 'We have all th he still felt th Dunkirk.¹⁰⁴

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Tirpitz, Hitler again remarked moodily to Goebbels on the damage that Churchill was doing to the British empire, and on Italy's unbroken series of defeats. 'Without them,' he said, 'Pétain would have stayed at our side, Franco might have joined us after all, and Gibraltar would be in our hands. Then Turkey would have been wide open to offers too. It just doesn't bear thinking about.' For a while he day-dreamed on: Suez dropping like a ripe fruit into his hands, England surrendering. No more. 'We have all that to thank our gentleman-allies for.' On balance however he still felt that Britain had lost the war in May 1940, at the time of Dunkirk.¹⁰⁴

The moon would soon be full. Goebbels drove out to Lanke for the weekend. The Luftwaffe was out in strength that Saturday May 10, delivering one last thundering night attack on London before regrouping to the east. The Houses of Parliament were seriously damaged. Goebbels took note of all the war news that Sunday evening. 'The day was quiet,' he wrote the next morning, 'without any major sensation.'¹⁰⁵ He settled down to vet the latest newsreel.

It featured a visit by Hitler's beetle-browed deputy, Rudolf Hess, to the Messerschmitt aircraft factory in Augsburg.

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41: The Malodorous Thing

May 12

THE sensation had already happened. On Monday May 12, 1941 the phone rang at Lanke. It was somebody at the Berghof—though not Hitler himself, he was still too shocked to speak—reporting that the deputy Führer, Rudolf Hess, had taken off for Scotland in a Messerschmitt late on Saturday and was now missing, perhaps dead. Hitler was therefore issuing a communiqué speaking of Hess's 'dementia.' 'What a sight for the world,' exclaimed Goebbels in his diary. 'A mentally-defective deputy to the Führer.' He blamed Otto Dietrich for this infelicitous choice of argument. He was furious that Hitler had not asked his advice.² The blow to the party's prestige could be fatal. He immediately ordered the Hess item removed from the weekly newsreel.

He hoped that Hess was dead, but he was not. On Tuesday the British revealed that the Nazi leader had landed by parachute. Goebbels told his secret morning conference to keep a stiff upper lip.³ He had been summoned to Hitler that afternoon with all the other gauleiters, he said.⁴ 'We'll get to the bottom of the affair this afternoon and I shall dictate more detailed instructions from the Obersalzberg after that,' he added. Meanwhile they were to concentrate on the air war—on anything but Hess.⁵

At the Berghof Hitler showed him two letters that Hess had left behind, mapping out a 'peace program' drafted in October.⁶ He was going to England to make her plight plain to her, to get the Duke of Hamilton to overthrow the Churchill regime and to bring about peace without any loss of face for Britain. The two letters oozed half-baked occultist theories. 'That's the kind of men we have ruling Germany,' wrote Goebbels perhaps incautiously. 'The whole business is explicable only in the light of his nature-healing and herb-munching foibles.' Perhaps Hitler's communiqué calling Hess 'demented' was not so far off base after all.⁷

Goebbels quailed at the prospect of what the enemy would make of this. He repeatedly said later that he wished he had been in the enemy's shoes. Then he would have published whatever he liked in Hess's name.⁸ He described Duff Cooper & Co. as dimwitted dilettantes.⁹

When Hitler spoke to all the gauleiters that afternoon, May 13, he was visibly shaken.¹⁰ After driving Goebbels back to the local airfield S.A.-chief of staff Viktor Lutze noted that the announcement about Hess would lead to a leadership crisis, because the public must ask how such sick men could be retained at the highest level; how could he even

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have been named 'second man' after Hitler, given that he had been hobnobbing with occultists, astrologers, and hypnotists.¹¹ In an impotent frenzy Goebbels banned all such charlatans.¹² If explaining Barbarossa was going to be tricky for Goebbels, explaining the Hess affair seemed impossible.

He found his department heads waiting for him on the tarmac at Tempelhof.¹³ 'Any doctor will tell you,' he said, taking them aside, 'that there are crazy people who seem all along to be perfectly normal and lucid.' Hess had deluded himself that he could single-handedly make peace. Goebbels had however persuaded Hitler, he continued, that they should not breathe one more word about it, and he offered to his dubious colleagues this analogy: A society hostess gives a dinner party; just as they all enter the dining room, her darling whippet dumps a sizable doo-dah on the priceless Persian carpet. What now? Taking her escort's arm, she strides over to the table acting as though the Malodorous Thing does not exist. 'The Malodorous Thing in our case,' he concluded, 'is the befuddled Mr Hess. He no longer exists.'¹⁴

He repeated this in more clinical language the next morning.¹⁵ 'Remember the Röhm affair,' he said. 'We shot our mouths off on that occasion with the result that the public talked of little else for years.' 'In any case,' he added mysteriously, 'something is about to happen in the military sphere, and this will distract attention from Hess.'¹⁶

AFTER the Hess incident Goebbels spends two days at Bad Aussee. His children are staying nearby with Magda, Ursula Quandt, and his mother. He gives all three ladies presents for Mother's Day.¹⁷

Back at Lanke, Ello Quandt visits him. She is our source for an episode which, in bald outline, has Magda suffering a nervous breakdown after witnessing a female secretary clambering from the gardens into her husband's study one night. She hysterically tells Ello that she's going to sue for divorce.¹⁸ The only secretary to whom the diary lays clues is the sweetly named Helga Hoenig, and the date is May 27, 1941. Magda is already in a state of nerves because Göring's costly airborne assault on Crete has just begun, casualties among the paratroops are heavy, and she is worried about Harald.¹⁹ Goebbels meticulously informs his diary that he has been sitting up late working on a new book.²⁰ 'Fräulein Hoenig helps me with this very assiduously.'²¹ It is fair to observe that his female staff very rarely rate such a mention in his dispatches; and to speculate that he, the master of all alibis, is creating yet another.

Ello phones Goebbels to advise him to head off Magda. The diary shows that he indeed drives over to Schwanenwerder. 'Magda's heart is playing up. She's got into a state again, what with the worry about Harald.'²² They have a 'little chat.' He hopes that she will soon get better. He drives back to Lanke alone. Neither has touched upon the window-climbing secretary. 'The crafty fox ran rings round me again,' Magda tells Ello as her husband drives away. Ello asks why she puts up with it all.

May 27

1944

'Look at me, Ello,' is the reply. 'I'm growing old. These girls are twenty years younger—and they haven't had seven children.'²³

on distant battlefields the gods of war still thundered. From Rommel's HQ in North Africa Alfred-Ingemar Berndt, his new aide, sent Goebbels dramatic reports about Tobruk.²⁴ In Munich the sinister Martin Bormann took over Hess's vacant role as head of the Party chancellery. Goebbels neither liked nor trusted him, and for years he would deal with him only at arm's length through Walter Tiessler. When Bormann began a vicious campaign against the churches, it was Goebbels who told him—through Tiessler—to lay off.²⁵

In Crete the desperate fighting came to an end. Herbert Heiduschke was already dead and buried at Khania; the death of his young adjutant affected Goebbels deeply, if his diary is to be believed.²⁶ Churchill alleged that Hitler's paratroops had worn New Zealand uniforms. Why not say they were dressed as postmen, Goebbels scoffed to his department heads? 'They've already had us in priests', nuns', and Dutchmen's uniforms.'²⁷ Göring himself telephoned that Harald was alive; Goebbels promised his stepson later that he would always see him provided for. 'He always treated me like his own son,' Harald said later.²⁸

Endless troop transports had begun heading east. Rumors were rife, most of them deliberately planted by Goebbels.²⁹ There was talk that Stalin and Hitler were about to meet: That Stalin was to lease the Ukraine to Germany for ninety-nine years: That a state visit to Berlin was imminent: That millions of red flags were already being stitched.³⁰ Goebbels lifted his wartime ban on dancing as a hint that the Nazi appetite was momentarily gorged. All Germany knew of immense troop movements heading west for the invasion of England—some people had actually seen the troop trains being loaded at Grunewald station. He briefed his head of broadcasting Dr Glasmeier to select new England fanfares, he activated English-speaking propaganda companies, and he held a top-secret conference of department heads on the last day of May to confide to them that Germany was about to invade England.³¹

May 22

About the real truth—Barbarossa—he briefed only a tiny handful including Hadamowsky and Major Titel. He must also have initiated the ministry's popular Professor Karl Bömer, head of his foreign press department. Bömer had an alcohol problem however and on May 22 Otto Dietrich phoned Goebbels with word that at a Bulgarian legation reception a week earlier the professor had blurted out these words: 'We'll thrash the Russians in four weeks. Rosenberg is to become governor-general of Russia. I am to become his under-Staatssekretär.'³² The Bulgarian envoy had cabled urgently to Sofia asking to be recalled for consultations. Tipped off by his press chief Dr Paul Schmidt and by the Forschungsamt codebreakers, Ribbentrop had greedily seized on this chance of scoring off Goebbels.³³ Hitler announced that he was going to have the head of 'whichever minister' had betrayed the Barbarossa secret to Bömer. He ordered a full-blooded Gestapo inquiry and the luckless

professor was thrashed by Goebbels.³⁵

He had to save face by Bömer swore that the professor claimed that what he could, and himself to blame for confuses politics matters is doing was stood before the alliance, forged by Goebbels testified that he had been convicted of car two years in prison sunk at Hitler's F

He could hardly have been the deadly secret agent amanuensis ('upon the last week in May but there was disaster bait.'⁴¹ He wondered blunter tactics.⁴² *Beobachter's June* the airborne assault the invasion of Europe entire edition as received their copy correspondent filed lines out of Germany

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* The effectiveness reported the suppression of Barbarossa had long been

professor was thrown into jail.³⁴ 'That's what comes from boozing,' wrote Goebbels.³⁵

He had to save Bömer if only to save his own skin. Witnesses named by Bömer swore that he had been misquoted; somewhat implausibly, the professor claimed not to have known the secret anyway. His minister did what he could, while cautiously telling his diary that Bömer had only himself to blame.³⁶ 'Ribbentrop,' he also wrote, 'does not play fair. He confuses politics with selling champagne, where the only thing that matters is doing your opponent down.'³⁷ On Hitler's insistence Bömer was stood before the People's Court on October 18. In an unusual alliance, forged of a mutual enmity to Ribbentrop, both Dietrich and Goebbels testified on Bömer's behalf—the minister declaiming theatrically, 'If you find Bömer guilty, then you must find me guilty too!'³⁸ Convicted of carelessness rather than treason, Bömer was sentenced to two years in prison.³⁹ It was further proof how low Goebbels' stock had sunk at Hitler's HQ.

He could hardly wait for the new war to begin. On June 4 he shared the deadly secret with Leopold Gutterer, his Staatssekretär and trusty amanuensis ('upon whom,' he had written, 'I can impose at will').⁴⁰ Since the last week in May he had been feeding 'invasion' rumors to the British, but there was disappointingly little evidence that they were rising to the bait.⁴¹ He wondered if he was being perhaps too subtle, and decided on blunter tactics.⁴² With Hitler's approval he drafted for the Berlin *Volksischer Beobachter's* June 13 edition an article, 'E.g. Crete,' which implied that the airborne assault on that island had been the final dress-rehearsal for the invasion of Britain; he then arranged for the Gestapo to seize the entire edition as soon as the embassies and foreign press corps had received their copies. As soon as the wiretappers heard one American correspondent file his story on this sensation to New York, all phone lines out of Germany were cut.⁴³

It was one of his most devious stunts. To the uninitiated his 'gaffe' looked like the terminal blow to his prestige. News of it spread throughout the government grapevine. He hammed it up all day: He did not attend his morning press conference (instead, backstage, he was trying out new fanfares for Barbarossa). Dyed-in-the-wool Nazis like *Reichsfrauenführerin* Gertrud Scholtz-Klink thought it prudent to cancel long-standing appointments with him. 'That's human nature for you,' reflected Goebbels, and he chuckled at these failbleses while outside his door Helga Hoenig and his other secretaries wept real tears over his apparent disgrace. Only the much maligned Robert Ley showed strength of character, telephoning him to ask if there was anything he could do—an act of true compassion of which Goebbels often spoke later on.^{44*}

Hitler returned to Berlin that day, Friday June 13, 1941. Keeping up

* The effectiveness of this costly stunt was arguable. The *New York Times* and others reported the suppression of the *VB* edition carrying his article, but the truth about Barbarossa had long been known to Churchill at least, from code-breaking.

pretenses, Goebbels did not walk over to the chancellery for his usual lunch either that day or the next. On Sunday however he was driven in pouring rain to the back entrance in a borrowed car and hidden behind a copy of the *Börsenzeitung*. Schaub saw him and Hitler laughing uproariously over the fake VB edition.⁴⁵

Hitler told him that Barbarossa would begin on Sunday June 22, with the mightiest artillery bombardment in history. 'The example of Napoleon will not be repeated.' Fortunately Stalin was massing his armies on the frontiers, so Hitler estimated that it would all be over in four months. Goebbels, who set little store by the Russians' fighting strength, estimated even less. 'If ever an operation was a walkover then this is.' As for the pre-attack period, there would this time be no protracted crescendo in the press, but total silence until the day of the sudden onslaught itself.

Goebbels was pleased that Hitler was going ahead with Barbarossa. He had abhorred the period of uneasy collaboration with Stalin as a blot on the Nazi escutcheon. He even spoke kindly of Alfred Rosenberg, saying that the coming campaign justified all that he had stood for. 'Right or wrong,' he quoted Hitler as saying, 'we've got to win.... Once we've pulled it off, who's to question us about how we did it?' Goebbels added, 'We've got so much to answer for that we've just got to win.'

He had begun drafting the leaflets, brochures, and posters ('Adolf Hitler the liberator') for this new crusade weeks before. In top secrecy Taubert's staff had recorded discs, films, and radio broadcasts in the Ukrainian, Belorussian, Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian tongues as well as in Russian, and in the dialects of countless Caucasian and other tribes.⁴⁶ He (wrongly) assumed that Hitler was planning to exploit these peoples' latent hatred of Moscow as he advanced. 'Probably,' wrote Goebbels, 'our soldiers will never have been welcomed with such enthusiasm.'⁴⁷ He learned of Hitler's actual policies on Russia only gradually, at second hand and, as it turned out, imperfectly. Rosenberg was to become minister for the occupied eastern territories with his chief of staff Arno Schickedanz in the Ukraine. Goebbels was uneasy about these two men—they were too doctrinaire.⁴⁸ But Rosenberg told Taubert that he planned to dismantle the Soviet Union and restore each constituent republic's liberty, which seemed sound enough.⁴⁹

Goebbels' dummy Task Force England was unobtrusively disbanded. The East Prussian Joachim Paltzo, with Dr Friedrich Mahlo and Adolf Mauer, both of the ministry's tourist office, would direct the real Task Force Russia.⁵⁰ Thirty propaganda companies would fan out behind the armies, making propaganda for the first time among the liberated peoples—one *Propagandatrupp* for each city—and they would bring reports back to Germany. Goebbels' propaganda guidelines to the Soviet Union also bore little comparison with Hitler's later policies. Their enemies, he said, were Stalin and his Jewish backers; German propaganda was not, of course, to be anti-socialist, nor was there to be a reversion to tsarism; since the Red Army was fiercely nationalist there would also be no hint of dismemberment.⁵¹

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He was therefore shocked by the scope of Hitler's plans for the Soviet empire when he saw them. Only the far eastern regions were to be left untouched.⁵² He decided that he would have to forget his past feuds with Rosenberg. 'If you handle him right,' he wrote after meeting him on June 14, 'you can get along with him.'⁵³

Behind closed doors and under a Gestapo guard, on Wednesday June 18 his ministry began printing three million copies of Hitler's proclamation to the eastern front.⁵⁴ To distract attention, Goebbels invited Italian diplomats out to Schwanenwerder for the weekend. On Saturday afternoon Hitler phoned to summon him to the chancellery, and he left his guests in his private cinema watching *Gone with the Wind*.

For three hours he and Hitler paced up and down the long chancellery drawing room, examining the dangers of attacking Russia, this malignant tumor in the east. The Führer felt that there must still be an influential peace faction in England—why had London otherwise systematically played down Hess's mission ever since he landed? For an hour he listened to the different Barbarossa fanfares, then approved of Goebbels' own choice—the pompous, brassy opening chords of Franz von Liszt's *Les Preludes* with a short added motif from the Horst Wessel anthem. They separated at two-thirty A.M. It was now Sunday June 22, 1941, the anniversary of Napoleon's ill-starred invasion of Russia. 'He has been working on this since July,' wrote Goebbels. 'And now the hour has struck.'

At three-thirty A.M. Hitler's armies and air force fell upon the Soviet Union. Unable to sleep, Goebbels paced his office, watching the minutes pass, listening to the sigh of history. Two hours later, he sat tautly before the microphone in the building's new studio, flanked by Gutterer and Hadamowsky, and heard the Barbarossa fanfare heralding Hitler's new campaign blaring from the loudspeakers. He broadcast the Führer's proclamation, then drove out to Schwanenwerder and his guests. The birds' dawn chorus was in full cry.⁵⁵

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42: No Room for Two of Us

GOEBBELS' diaries, now all retrieved from hiding, chronicle Hitler's Russian campaign almost to the last day. Of particular interest is how this crusade, embarked upon in such a froth of misplaced optimism, impinged upon him as minister: How he argued for the adoption of more realistic policies toward the 'liberated' Russians, and how, when all seemed lost, Hitler finally granted to him the powers he craved to mobilize the entire nation. But he was a realist too. He prohibited the publication of maps of the entire Soviet Union, in case readers felt that this time their Führer had bitten off more than he could chew.¹

June 22
He justified Barbarossa effortlessly. Churchill came to his aid with a radio broadcast that same Sunday evening, June 22, 1941, pledging unlimited British aid to Moscow. Goebbels argued that they had been conspiring together all along.² In an article published four days later he argued that the Soviet Union had been banking on taking over a stricken and war-ravaged Europe. 'In one hand they clutched the treaty with us ... but in the other they sharpened the blade to plunge into our back.'³ Two weeks later *Das Reich* published his *pièce justificative*, 'The Veil Falls,' in which he described Barbarossa as a war (though not a 'crusade'—he had forbidden the usage of that overworked noun) by civilized people 'against spiritual putrefaction, against the decay of public morality, against the bloody terrorization of mind and body, against criminal policies whose perpetrators sit astride mounds of corpses casting about for whom to select as their next victim.'⁴

For six days Hitler ordered a news blackout. On the seventh he ordered twelve special communiqués broadcast.⁵ At hourly intervals from eleven A.M. the same trumpets sounded. Goebbels was livid about this amateurish day-long deluge of fanfares.⁶ It allowed the common man to glimpse the workings of high propaganda; precisely because it destroyed the illusion, he had forbidden newspapers to publish behind-the-scenes photographs at film studios and reprimanded a weekly magazine for portraying the hallowed phonograph disc from which the victory fanfares were played during the battle of France.⁷ 'I shall see to it,' he wrote, wrongly blamed for this stunt, 'that this never happens again.'⁸

For Goebbels, image was everything. War newsreels never showed air-raid victims, and he persuaded Hitler to suppress lingering shots of battle-casualties in a film on the heroism of the medical corps during the battle

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of Crete.⁹ He wanted the public to believe in an antiseptic, almost bloodless war.

He injected his propaganda into the Soviet Union initially by means of three black transmitters disguised as Trotskyite, separatist, and nationalist.¹⁰ Eventually, despite the lack of receivers in the Soviet Union, he would have twenty-two official transmitters as well, broadcasting thirty-four daily bulletins in eighteen different languages.¹¹ He had persuaded the communists Torgler, Kasper, and Albrecht, at a secret meeting in his ministry during May, to broadcast appeals to the enemy in authentic communist double-speak to overthrow the 'traitor' Stalin and set up workers' and soldiers' councils; Goebbels stopped them from calling for street demonstrations, in case nobody showed up.¹² Hoping to use Ernst Thälmann too, he sent him reports on conditions in the Soviet Union; still in a concentration camp, 'Teddy' Thälmann disdained to collaborate (and was eventually shot).¹³

After a few days in shock, Stalin came back fighting with a famous radio broadcast on July 3, 1941, proclaiming a patriotic war.¹⁴ Hitler now authorized Goebbels to unleash his main anti-Soviet propaganda campaign.¹⁵ There was no lack of material. Hearing of atrocities in Lvov, where the retreating Red Army had murdered six hundred Ukrainians, Goebbels rushed twenty journalists there to get eye-witness accounts.¹⁶ There was no need for him to invent horror stories. Hitler's secret police had stormed the Soviet diplomatic buildings in Paris and Berlin, and found some decidedly undiplomatic equipment including sound-proof execution chambers, a poisons laboratory, and electric crematoria for disposing of human remains.¹⁷ 'If a criminal gang comes to power,' dictated Goebbels reading the reports on these gruesome finds submitted by Heydrich and Abwehr chief Vice-Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, 'then it will conduct its politics with criminal methods too.' 'There would have been no room for the two of us in Europe in the long run.'¹⁸

Goebbels called briefly at No. 20 Hermann-Göring Strasse to check progress on the air-raid shelter that Speer was excavating in its gardens. Architect Hugo Bartels said it consumed enough cement to build three hundred working-class homes.¹⁹ Seven feet thick, its roof and walls would withstand the heaviest British bombs so far.²⁰

Worried that one thoughtless bomb might destroy his diaries, Goebbels moved all twenty volumes to safety in the Reichsbank vaults.²¹ He finally abandoned writing the diaries in his barely decipherable script, and began dictating them instead each morning to Otte, his high-speed stenographer, from notes compiled during the previous day. Aged thirty-four, Otte performed this task until the end, sometimes having to sleep on a couch next door until the next torrent of dictation was ready to sweep over him.²² One single day's entry might run to 144 pages.²³ Relays of secretaries typed each page on fine bond paper in triplicate, triple-spaced and in an outsize typeface; until the primitive glass microfiches containing all 75,000 pages surfaced in Moscow in 1992, where this

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July 3

* D.R. talks of how Goebbels was studied by the CIA (Harvard Humboldt tricks Allen Dulles) + Berlin isolation

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author was the first historian privileged to use them, only a fragment was believed to have survived.

July 9

OTTE's first transcript was dated July 9, 1941. His minister had just paid a flying visit to the 'Wolf's Lair,' Hitler's new HQ built in a swampy, mosquito-infested forest in East Prussia.

Hitler boasted that the Germans had already damaged or destroyed two-thirds of Stalin's forces and written off five-sixths of his tanks and planes. 'Our strategy is to take on our enemies one at a time,' Hitler explained. 'Preventive wars are still the best.' Stalin had probably been banking on seizing Romania that autumn. Bad weather would have stalled Hitler's counter-moves, and he would have lost his only significant petroleum supplies. Goebbels was impressed: 'The Führer rescued the Reich from its fate,' he dictated. Hitler said that after 'rubbing out' Moscow and Leningrad he would advance on the river Volga and the Ural mountains. A repetition of Napoleon's disaster was impossible. The Nazi forces had motor transport and panzer divisions, which Napoleon had not. Goebbels told his diary that Hitler had asked him to visit the Wolf's Lair more often, every week or so; but five weeks passed before another invitation came.²⁴

A week after Barbarossa began Goebbels ran into unexpected problems with Rosenberg. On the day before his visit to HQ, Hitler had ruled that Rosenberg's Ost-ministry, and not Goebbels, should control all propaganda in the east.²⁵ Goebbels vainly referred to the decree of September 1939 which entrusted to his ministry all 'practical execution' of propaganda.²⁶ His old rival was trying to become the next tsar, he decided.²⁷ As the years passed Rosenberg proved woefully incapable of organizing on an imperial scale, and Goebbels contemptuously referred to his apparatus as the 'Cha-ost' ministry.²⁸ 'If only we had proceeded more shrewdly in the east,' he would reflect in 1944, 'and if only we had made clear to the peoples there that we were coming not as conquerors but as liberators from bolshevism, the decisive blow against the Soviet Union might have met with success.'²⁹

At first as the Wehrmacht advanced the jubilant natives had greeted Hitler's troops with garlands of flowers, making no attempt to adopt the scorched-earth policies demanded by Stalin.³⁰ Goebbels stressed in his propaganda that their common enemy was their 'Jewish-bolshevik' oppressors.³¹ Rosenberg however pursued very different policies.³² He pronounced all Soviet citizens equally culpable for having tolerated bolshevism, and acted accordingly. Although there were virtually no printing presses or paper, and although 'every nail and pane of glass' had to be imported from Germany, it was Goebbels' task to cover the eastern territories with (Rosenberg's) propaganda. His ministry blocked Rosenberg's plans where it could, but that was not often.³³ 'We managed to prevent the total eradication of the Ukrainian intelligentsia,' reported Dr Taubert early in 1945. But it was an unequal fight. Rosenberg unhelpfully declared all Soviet citizens 'sub-humans' and wondered why they flocked

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to the ranks of the partisans. It would take Goebbels a year to get an odious S.S. brochure called *Sub-Humans* withdrawn.³⁴ He would fight equally hard to have the *Ost*-badge issued to Russian slave laborers replaced by something smacking less obviously of the badge worn by Jews.³⁵ Gunter d'Alquen told him that the Ukrainians who had, as the Germans marched in, joyfully dug up ancient icons which they had concealed for decades, now lived in mortal terror of these new Nazi oppressors.

As Goebbels flew down to Salzburg for the Mozart festival he dipped into a one-hundred-page book by an American, entitled *Germany Must Perish!*³⁶ The author, Theodore N. Kaufman, proposed the 'summary sterilization' of all Germans. 'Germany must perish forever!' wrote Kaufman. 'In fact—not in fancy.' The dust cover carried endorsements from *Time* magazine, the *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times*.³⁷

It was an extraordinary book. 'Well,' dictated Goebbels gleefully to Otte. 'This Jew has done a disservice to the enemy. If he had composed this book at my behest he couldn't have done a better job.'³⁸ He decided to issue one million copies to German soldiers; after initially shelving this on legal grounds, fearing American reprisals against German copyrights, he issued the book with a photograph showing President Roosevelt apparently dictating the contents.³⁹

Solutions to the Jewish problem were never far from his mind. In August 1940 he had discussed with Hitler the liquidation by the Soviet N.K.V.D. of the intelligentsia in the Baltic states. Goebbels had thoroughly approved. Without their intelligentsia, he had pointed out, the Baltic states were emasculated.⁴⁰ Later that month he and Hitler again agreed that Europe's Jews should all eventually be shipped off to Madagascar.⁴¹ When Goebbels visited Kartowitz in September 1940 the gauleiter Fritz Bracht had confirmed that all the Jews there had been deported.⁴²

For Goebbels there were two difficulties: Neither the broad German public nor their Führer shared his satanic antisemitism. He studied Hitler's attitudes carefully during a dinner with Hans Frank, upon whose Polish domain, the Government-General, fell the task of absorbing the Reich's detritus of unwanted Jews.⁴³ The same Hitler who had issued ruthless orders for the execution of the Soviet commissars was by no means as hostile as Goebbels desired toward western Europe's more cultivated Jews. He heard Hitler speak warmly of both the composer Gustav Mahler and the producer Max Reinhardt (Max Goldmann), and concede that in their performances the Jews were often 'not bad.'⁴⁴

The public attitude was the lesser of these two problems. Goebbels got to work on that with the only three antisemitic films that his studios ever produced, *The Rothschilds* (premiered on July 17, 1940), *Jud Süß* (September 24), and *The Eternal Jew*; this third film contained such distressing scenes of Jewish ritual slaughter that Goebbels ordered an expurgated version made for the more squeamish members of the public.⁴⁵

1941

His own visceral hatred of the Jews had become more radical since 1940. Physically liquidating them now seemed an increasingly viable solution. If it was possible to liquidate the insane, if Goring's air force was killing the relatively innocent English by the thousand, why should the 'guilt-laden' Jews be spared? Goebbels had discussed the euthanasia project ('the covert liquidation of the mentally ill,' he called it) with Bouhler on January 30, 1941. Bouhler had informed him that they had quietly disposed of eighty thousand so far, with sixty thousand more still to go. 'Hard work, but necessary too,' applauded Goebbels.⁴⁶ To counter public disquiet he commissioned from leading film director Wolfgang Liebeneiner, the Steven Spielberg of the day, a harrowing film on the human freaks whom a compassionate Third Reich was pleased to put out of their misery.⁴⁷

To him the Jews were fair game. Thus when Jewish ringleaders triggered strikes in Nazi-occupied Holland in February 1941 he demanded that 'this Jewish rabble' be hanged.⁴⁸ Visiting Posen soon after, he heard from the gauleiter Arthur Greiser of how he was cleansing the surrounding Warthegau. 'There has been all manner of liquidating going on here,' he reported approvingly in his diary, 'particularly of the Jewish garbage.'⁴⁹ He saw every justification: had the Jews not declared war on the Reich?⁵⁰ He was wont to say that the advantage of the Nazis' being branded worldwide as antisemites was that they could now do with the Jews as they saw fit.⁵¹ Primarily he wanted to expel all Berlin's Jews. They formed the dangerous nucleus of an enemy intelligentsia. Hans Hinkel, Goebbels' specialist on Jewish affairs, had reported in September 1940 that there were still some seventy-two thousand in the city. The intermediate aim was to deport five hundred a month to the south-east; as soon as the war ended the rest would be sent back to the east.⁵² Later that month Hinkel informed Goebbels that about four million Jews still lived in Hitler's present dominions. 'The Madagascar plan, which has now been given the go-ahead, provides for about three and a half million of these to be shipped to Madagascar over approximately eighteen months after the war.'⁵³

'Dr Goebbels,' Tiessler told the party chancellor, 'regards every Jew as a counter-propagandist. Henceforth Jews should rent out accommodation only to other Jews.'⁵⁴ Albert Speer agreed with him fervently, though for other reasons. According to his figures there were over twenty-three thousand Jewish homes in the city. His official diary* shows that at the beginning of 1941 he had initiated a cold-blooded slum-clearance plan which involved evicting Jewish tenants and cramming them into other already overcrowded Jewish homes.⁵⁵ But no matter how many ordinances Goebbels issued, the Jews found ways to circumvent them;

*I.e., the original diary, not the sanitized and retyped version which Speer artfully deposited in the German federal archives after his release from Spandau prison, and from which is excised all reference to his infamous Hauptabteilung Umsiedlung (Main Reshousing Office) which conducted the evictions.

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and although he repeated to Dr Gutterer in April 1941 a suggestion that the Jews should be forced to wear a distinctive badge, this idea too made slow progress.⁵⁶

The direct expulsion of the Jews from Berlin was not yet practicable. The cleansing of Vienna had been given priority, and the eastern railroad system was overburdened with war transports.⁵⁷ Besides, some thirty thousand of Berlin's Jews were working in munitions factories.⁵⁸ Goebbels still felt, as he complained to Hitler on March 17, 1941, that his city should not have to house around seventy thousand Jews. He told Gutterer afterward however that the Führer had still not decided that Berlin should be 'freed of its Jews.'⁵⁹ Gutterer at once called an inter-ministerial meeting attended by representatives of both Speer and Heydrich. The latter's man, S.S. Sturmbannführer Adolf Eichmann, went over the recent history: Hitler, he explained, had put Heydrich in charge of evacuating the Jews, and Heydrich had recently developed a plan to lodge them all in Poland though Hans Frank was reluctant to absorb any more there. Eichmann reminded the ministry that their manufacturing industry needed every available Jew.⁶⁰ Speer's man (probably Dietrich Clahe, chief of his infamous Rehousing Office) explained that Speer wanted the twenty thousand Jewish homes in Berlin emptied as a reserve for air-raid housing losses.⁶¹

Goebbels discussed this briefly with Hitler on June 19. Hans Frank was visiting too and made no secret of his eagerness to displace his unwanted Jews still further east once Russia was defeated. 'A fitting punishment,' philosophized Goebbels, 'given the way that they have pitted country against country and plotted the war.' 'The Führer,' he routinely added, 'also prophesied all this to the Jews.' Hitler reassured Frank that Poland was envisaged only as a transit camp for Europe's Jews; in due course they would all be deported further east.⁶²

Thwarted in his immediate intention, Goebbels pressed on with the plan for Jews to be forced to wear a distinguishing badge in public, explaining that they were getting more uppity with each day that passed. Polish women in Berlin already had to wear a 'P' badge, and Jewish street workers a yellow armband.⁶³ He directed Taubert to discuss this idea with the Gestapo. In fact the Gestapo had first mooted the idea in 1938.⁶⁴ Late in 1939 the propaganda ministry had independently suggested that Jews should wear some kind of lapel pin to facilitate the new ordinance that they give up their seats in public transport; the idea had been put to Himmler but got no further.⁶⁵ The Gestapo's chief, S.S. Brigadeführer Heinrich Müller, told Taubert that Heydrich had made similar proposals ever since 1940. Tiessler asked Bormann if a decision from Hitler was likely soon, and there the matter rested until the summer of 1941.⁶⁶

As Hitler's armies invaded the Baltic states in June and July 1941, expelling the recent Russian conquerors, the natives of those three countries exacted terrible retribution on the Jews who had figured prominently among the murderous commissars. Shortly before Goebbels saw Hitler that August he learned from d'Alquén of this bloody sequel, and pitilessly

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referred once again to Hitler's famous prophecy of January 1939.⁶⁷ During that month Speer evicted five thousand more Berlin Jews from their homes.⁶⁸ Goebbels applauded, and rhetorically asked his staff what their returning soldiers would think if they found the Jews still living in eight-room homes and for ever whining in public transport.⁶⁹ 'I don't want to see the mob taking the Jewish problem into its own hands again like 1938.'⁷⁰ 'You only have to imagine,' he dictated to Otte, 'what the Jews would do with us if they were ever in power.'⁷¹

SPEER's air-raid shelter for Goebbels was scheduled for completion at the end of August 1941, and high time too. Autumn was approaching and Churchill's bomber squadrons would soon return. Even the Russians had recently sent bombers over Berlin.⁷²

Stalin was playing Goebbels at his own game. One evening an enemy voice from Moscow broke into the brief silence before the evening news bulletin and intoned blasphemies against the Führer.⁷³ The same voice used subsequent pauses to pass sarcastic comments on each preceding item. There seemed to be no adequate counter-measure. Goebbels, who had total control of the radio news, ordered the bulletins read ever faster, and then had to start rumors to explain away this undignified verbal gallop.⁷⁴ The enemy voices continued. They must have seemed like an ill omen from the east.

Aug 18

GOEBBELS reported to Hitler's HQ on August 18, 1941 for the first time in over five weeks. Hitler was recovering from an attack of marshland dysentery and, Goebbels was malevolently pleased to hear, some kind of attack brought on by a stand-up row with Ribbentrop. In the four hours that they spent strolling through the heavily patrolled woodlands within the compound Hitler admitted that Barbarossa had run into difficulties. His experts had credited Stalin with five thousand tanks: He had closer to twenty thousand, and not ten thousand warplanes but twenty.⁷⁵ However he put Stalin's losses at three million dead, and he had already taken 1.4 million Soviet prisoners.* Perhaps, continued Hitler, Stalin would ask for peace terms. He would grant them, provided that his forces were totally disarmed. He had no qualms about letting bolshevism as such survive. He hoped to conclude the campaign by the onset of winter.

Goebbels touched upon the topic of euthanasia.⁷⁷ In a recent sermon Count von Galen, bishop of Münster, had threatened to have the 'murderers' prosecuted. While Goebbels felt that Galen should be hanged for sedition, Hitler argued that in general they must avoid all potentially divisive subjects, like the inter-denominational conflict.⁷⁸ Undeterred, Goebbels raised the Jewish problem and showed the Führer Kaufman's book, *Germany must Perish!* Hitler assured him that his sinister prophecy of January 1939 was automatically being fulfilled. 'In the east,' reported

* At Potsdam Marshal Stalin confided to Churchill in July 1945 that Soviet losses during the war had amounted to five million killed or missing.⁷⁶

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Goebbels, dictating this diary passage to his secretary Richard Otte, 'the Jews are having to foot the bill; they have already paid it in part in Germany.' Angered by the Kaufman book, Hitler gave him carte-blanche to introduce the badge for the Jews. Goebbels decided that it should be a yellow cloth star with the word *Jude* emblazoned across it.⁷⁹

As propaganda minister he kept his finger on the pulse of German public opinion pulse at several vital points. His staff closely analyzed all incoming mail, including anonymous letters; a brutally frank weekly morale report was compiled by Amt III of Himmler's security service; and his own network of forty-two gau-level Propaganda Offices (Reichspropagandaämter) reported each Monday on public morale (*Stimmung*) and behavior (*Haltung*). They in turn drew their information from cells in individual factories and party branches. Dr Immanuel Schäffer, who had to collate this data at the ministry, found a wide measure of agreement between them. Broadly speaking, while behavior remained remarkably stable, public morale fluctuated wildly.⁸⁰

Goebbels feared that in the long term the easy victories of the Wehrmacht during the early weeks of Barbarossa had been devastating for morale.⁸¹ He recalled his trusty Alfred-Ingemar Berndt, now an S.S. Oberführer, from North Africa, to take over his central Propaganda Department.⁸² Berndt secretly confided to Himmler that his job would be 'to carry the German public through the coming winter.' 'Our propaganda this summer has blundered badly,' he added. 'We've been in the illusions business, we've painted everything too rosy.' Churchill's method, he reminded Himmler, was to paint the situation to his public in the darkest hue as possible, but to stress that in the end British arms would be triumphant.⁸³ British analysts detected a shift in Goebbels propaganda output to a more somber mood.⁸⁴

FIVE more weeks passed before he saw Hitler again. Barbarossa had regained its lost momentum. At five P.M. on September 20, 1941 German radio announced the captured of Kiev, capital of the Ukraine. Two million Russian prisoners were now in German hands. As Goebbels and Hadamowsky flew into the Wolf's Lair for lunch on the twenty-third the news was of even greater victories as four Soviet armies, encircled by army groups Center and South, faced destruction.⁸⁵ Hitler told them that the worst would be over by mid-October. He would follow through with thrusts toward Kharkov, Stalingrad, and the river Don, to rob Stalin of his coal- and arms-production centers. Leningrad would be starved out, then plowed literally into the ground.⁸⁶ Goebbels learned that Hitler was putting Reinhard Heydrich in charge of an increasingly fractious Prague. 'Such situations,' the minister dictated approvingly, 'call for a strong man.'

He found Heydrich here at Hitler's HQ and thus he was able to coordinate with him their measures against the Jews.⁸⁷ The new badge had been gazetted into law two or three weeks earlier, but there had been

In Hans Fritzsche's view it was this unexpected sentimentalism of the Berliner that finally decided Goebbels on the rapid and ruthless deportation of the Jews.⁹⁰ Dictating his diary on September 23 the propaganda minister noted that this would still have to await the end of Barbarossa. 'They are all to be transported ultimately to [regions?] adjacent to the bolshevik [rump territory?]' he dictated.* Hitler had confirmed to him that little by little all Jews were to be expelled from Berlin, Vienna, and Prague.⁹¹ This conformed with what he had told Himmler. The aim was to evacuate them all by the end of 1941: First to occupied Poland, then, in the spring of 1942, further east into occupied Russia. The first sixty thousand, were to be expelled from Berlin, Vienna, and Prague. The first sixty thousand, Himmler had thereupon notified Heydrich, would be dumped in the Lodz ghetto.⁹² To the distinctly disenchanted Nazi governor of Lodz, Friedrich Uebelhör, Himmler wrote that such was 'the Führer's will.'⁹³ 'All the Jews are to be removed,' Hitler repeated during lunch on October 6. 'And not just to the Government-General [former Poland] but right on to the east. It is only our pressing need for war transport that stops us doing so right now.'⁹⁴

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*The photocopy is only partially decipherable. On orders from the minister of the interior in Bonn the German federal archives on July 1, 1993 refused to allow the author to inspect the original image. See Author's Acknowledgments, page viii.

1000

1941

further: 'We have finally and without exaggeration won this war.'⁹⁷ Later that day Hitler sent for Otto Dietrich and his young deputy Heinz Lorenz and dictated to them a written briefing for the press; he also directed General Rudolf Schmundt to give to Dietrich an order of the day announcing that Marshal Timoshenko's armies were trapped. Dietrich drafted a press statement. General Jodl approved the text.⁹⁸ 'The Russian armies have been annihilated,' it said in part. And, 'All that remains in Russia is policing work.' Arriving in Berlin the next day, October 9, Dietrich told a press conference that Russia was 'done for.'

The first that Goebbels knew was when he read the afternoon headlines: 'THE GREAT HOUR HAS STRUCK: THE CAMPAIGN IN THE EAST DECIDED!' He limped furiously up and down his home's carpeted corridor. He phoned Major Martin, his High Command liaison officer. 'Are there any fresh bulletins since this morning?' he snarled.⁹⁹ As fanfares announced the special communiqué, on the eastern front it was now pouring with rain. Agonies of uncertainty beset Goebbels. On the tenth he telephoned Jodl. The general feigned ignorance and dismay and warned that the war would continue all winter.¹⁰⁰ Goebbels sent agents out into the beerhalls to sample public opinion. The people had all heard Dietrich say the campaign was 'decided' but understood it as *won*.

Goebbels switched to damage-control. He put it about that Hitler himself had ordered the communiqué solely as a ploy to jolt the Japanese into some kind of action.¹⁰¹ Taking a dramatically independent line, he tried to defuse the High Command's gaffe. In the *Völkischer Beobachter* he argued that while victory was indeed certain, nobody could say when; then, in *Das Reich*, as the first wintry blizzards began to harass Hitler's mud-soaked and exhausted riflemen, he published an editorial entitled, 'When, or How?'¹⁰² This too, despite the question in the title, talked of Germany's victory as inevitable. 'The chance which the German nation has today is its greatest, but also its last.' The entire nation, he wrote, must make one gigantic effort for victory. With powerful echoes of Winston Churchill, on whom he was now increasingly modeling his oratory, appealing to Britain in the dark hours of 1940, Dr Goebbels now exhorted: 'Let us therefore go forth and fight, and labor until victory is ours.'

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43: Exodus

DISGUISED as 'Dr Sedgwick,' 'Putzi' Hanfstaengl was now well housed in Washington and advising President Roosevelt on his former top Nazi pals. 'Always smile,' was Goebbels' maxim, he said: 'Lie with a smile, deny with a smile, intrigue with a smile.'¹ Goebbels was still smiling. It was noticeable that he barely mentioned the United States in his articles.² Neither he nor Hitler was worried by Washington; the Führer considered Japan's powerful Pacific fleet sufficient to hold the Americans in check.³ When Roosevelt's lend-lease act was passed Goebbels scoffed that this was purely a means for the Americans to inherit Britain's assets when the time came.⁴

Fabr.

Hitler had imposed restrictions on all hostilities with the United States. He eased them marginally in February 1941 although he would not allow Dr Goebbels to take the gloves off in his propaganda, even when Roosevelt ordered the seizure of German merchant ships and their crews.⁵ Goebbels gradually stepped up his shortwave propaganda transmissions across the Atlantic.⁶ Writing under a pseudonym he published a leader article in the *VB* depicting Roosevelt as the helpless puppet of Jewish advisers.⁷ He issued a rare photograph showing the president in full masonic regalia.⁸ Visiting Berlin however his Transocean news agency expert in the United States warned him not to bank on the ethnic Germans there—they were either rotten through and through, or simpletons; he advised Goebbels to make the propaganda to America crude and unsophisticated.⁹ He prepared a fifteen-minute film, *A Stroll through America*, portraying Roosevelt with his 'Jewish henchmen,' the strikes and hunger marches, the Negro jazz and jitterbug, and the prevalence of kidnapping—though not mentioning Charles Lindbergh, whose baby's alleged kidnapper was a German. The film pirated American newsreels, however, and the foreign ministry warned that showing it abroad would invite legal repercussions from the United States.¹⁰

Germans were not liked in America. When the New York evening paper *PM* offered a prize for the wittiest greetings telegram for Goebbels' next birthday, it received literally thousands of entries: 204 entrants had rhymed *forty-four* and *no more*; 198 had a pun about a '44 revolver. 'May your next lie read, I am alive and well,' wrote one man. 'Hope you get lockjaw and seasick at the same time,' wished another. 'God keep you—but immediately,' pleaded yet a third.¹¹

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As he received the winning 'Goebbelsgram'—its text is not known—from New York, the minister began composing his own most venomous leader article ever for *Das Reich*, entitled 'The Jews are to blame!'

His mass expulsion of the Jews from Berlin was beginning. On October 14, 1941 S.S. General Kurt Daluege signed the formal order as national chief of police and the deportations began the next day.¹² Five hundred or a thousand at a time, family by family, the Berlin Jews were rounded up, corralled in the ruined synagogue in Levetzow Strasse and then loaded aboard passenger trains at Grünwald station for freighting to the east.¹³ The first train with 1,103 Jews was dispatched on October 18; three more followed on October 24 (1,024 Jews) and 27 (1,009 Jews), and November 1 (1,033).¹⁴ All four were bound for the ghetto at Lodz. Between October 18 and November 2, confirmed Speer's diary, some 4,500 Jews were 'evacuated,' releasing to him and Gauleiter Goebbels one thousand apartments—supposedly for bombed-out Berliners, but the cream of these vacant buildings went to their closest cronies.¹⁵

Hitler was neither consulted nor informed. Ten days after the forced exodus began, he referred, soliloquizing over supper to Himmler and Heydrich, to the way the Jews had started this war. 'Let nobody tell me,' Hitler added, 'that despite that we can't park them in the marshier parts of Russia!' 'By the way,' he added, 'it's not a bad thing that public rumor attributes to us a plan to exterminate the Jews.' He pointed out however that he had no intention of starting anything at present. 'There's no point in adding to one's difficulties at a time like this!'¹⁶

What did the 'east' hold for Berlin's Jews? In the Baltic states they were loved least of all.¹⁷ Nor were the other eastern territories healthier destinations.¹⁸ Berlin's fifth trainload, of 1,030 Jews, set out for Minsk on November 14. Of Minsk's 238,000 citizens in 1939 one hundred thousand had been Jews, many of them skilled workers.¹⁹ By December 1941 only eighteen thousand of the original Jews had not fled or been shot. These and the newcomers from Berlin survived if they were fit for work; the rest died or were put to death a few months later. Some 3,500 unemployable Jews of the seven thousand sent there from Berlin, Bremen, Vienna, and Brno 'on the Führer's orders' during November 1941 were liquidated in the last four days of July 1942.²⁰

So much for Minsk. The trainload of Berlin's Jews sent to Kaunas in Lithuania on November 17 probably fared no better.²¹ Goebbels had visited the country two weeks before. As in the other Baltic states, the Soviet secret police had deported forty thousand Lithuanians to Siberia in 1940.²² 'The Jews,' Goebbels learned during his visit, 'were mainly active as G.P.U. [secret police] agents and informants, and they are to blame for the deaths of countless Lithuanian nationalists and intellectuals.' When the tide turned in June 1941 and the Russians were driven out, the Lithuanians took revenge on the sixty thousand remaining Jews, liquidating 3,800 in Kaunas alone.²³ Hundreds of the rest, Goebbels learned, were being shot.²⁴ Touring the ghetto in Vilnius he shuddered at the sight of Jews huddled together, 'frightful shapes you can't even

Nov 14

look at, let alone touch.' 'The Jews are like the lice of civilized mankind,' he dictated in another revealing entry the next day. 'They've got to be exterminated somehow . . . Spare them now and you'll fall victim to them later on.' Hobbling awkwardly around this cheerless, snow-covered second city of Lithuania he reached one firm conclusion: 'Here I would not want to be buried.'²⁵

Nov 27

On November 27, 1941 Speer reported to Goebbels on his efforts to make good the air-raid damage in Berlin. Their third *Aktion* against the Jews was just beginning.²⁶ That day a thousand more, the seventh trainload, departed from Berlin, bound this time for Riga, capital of Latvia. All would die three mornings later.

Like Lithuania, Latvia had begun killing its Jews soon after Barbarossa began, in revenge for the 33,038 Latvians kidnapped or murdered by the Soviet secret police since June 1940. In July 1941 there had been seventy thousand Jews in Latvia—the rest, some thirty thousand, had fled with their Russian benefactors. German Sonderkommandos manned by Latvian auxiliary police, usually relatives of the Russians' victims, had murdered about thirty thousand Jews by October 1941.²⁷ In October Hitler ordered a big concentration camp built just outside Riga to house the Jews expelled from the Reich and the occupied Czech territories. A site was eventually chosen at Salaspils to house twenty-five thousand Jews from Germany.²⁸ But construction was delayed, and when they were told to expect these twenty-five thousand to begin arriving on November 10, with another twenty-five thousand bound for Minsk, Rosenberg's officials appealed for a postponement.²⁹ The army also protested at this needless burden on already scarce railroad capacity.³⁰

Nov 21

For this and other reasons, by November 21, only seven thousand of Berlin's seventy-seven thousand Jews had been expelled.³¹ At the end of November, Speer's diary records, he booted three thousand more out of their apartments.³²

Acute
Hot

Goebbels uttered not the slightest sympathy for these innocent victims of his obsession, although he was well aware that public resistance was growing. He put up subway posters proclaiming 'The Jews are our misfortune,' with texts explaining precisely why.³³ Cruel mishaps began to occur. Goebbels had denied to film actor Joachim Gottschalk the role of Leitwein in the new color film *The Golden City* unless he divorce his Jewish wife or at least force her to emigrate to Switzerland.³⁴ When the star's colleagues interceded for him, Goebbels screamed at them about the 'sexual serfdom' of simple ex-matelots like Gottschalk who were, he said, an easy prey for the sexual knavery of Jewesses. Refused the role, Gottschalk killed himself, his wife Meta, and his eight-year-old son Michael that November. Goebbels dictated in his diary: 'We are living in very harsh times and fate is sometimes pitiless toward the individual.'³⁵ He then gave the screw another heartless twist. Already deprived of their own telephones, he forbade Jews to use public payphones either. In a cynical and not unrelated ruling, he prohibited the use of the word *liquidation* in connection with their 'summary executions in the east.'

That word, Soviets.³⁶

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That word, he said, was to be reserved for the crimes perpetrated by the Soviets.³⁶

It was during those same weeks that he dictated his tract entitled 'The Jews are to blame.'³⁷ He ordered it given the widest circulation on the eastern front.³⁸

It appeared in *Das Reich* on November 16, 1941. A few excerpts suffice to illustrate its pernicious thrust. 'The Jews wanted this war,' he argued, 'and now they have it.' They were getting their just desserts. An eye for an eye. All Jews alike, whether languishing in an eastern ghetto or whining for war from New York, were conspiring against Germany. The Yellow Star, he argued, was akin to a 'hygienic prophylactic,' because the most dangerous were those otherwise not recognizable as Jews. To those who might bleat that the Jews were humans too he pointed out that the same could be said of muggers, rapists, and pimps. 'Suddenly one has the impression that all of Berlin's Jews are either darling little babies who wouldn't hurt a fly, or fragile old ladies.' 'Were we to lose this war,' he continued, 'these oh-so-harmless Jewish worthies would suddenly turn into rapacious wolves. . . . That's what happened in Bessarabia and the Baltic states after the bolsheviks marched in, and neither the people nor the governments there had had the slightest sympathy for them. For us, in our fight against the Jews, there is no going back.'

The article displayed a far more uncompromising face than Hitler's towards the Jews. When the Führer came to Berlin for Luftwaffe general Ernst Uder's funeral he again instructed Goebbels to pursue a policy against the Jews 'that does not cause us endless difficulties,' and told him to go easy on mixed marriages in future.³⁹

Dieter Wisliceny, one of Eichmann's closest associates, would describe the Goebbels article in *Das Reich* as a watershed in the Final Solution of the Jewish problem.⁴⁰ The S.S. took it as a sign from above. Adolf Eichmann would admit in his unpublished memoirs, 'It's quite possible that I got orders to direct this or that railroad transport to Riga.'⁴¹ On the last day of November, on the orders of the local S.S. commander Friedrich Jeckeln, four thousand of Riga's unwanted Jews were trucked five miles down the Dvinsk highway to Skiatowa, plundered, and machine-gunned into two or three pits.⁴² According to one army colonel who witnessed it, a trainload of Jews from Berlin—those expelled three days before—arrived in the midst of this *Aktion*; its passengers were taken straight out to the pits and shot.⁴³ This happened even as Hitler, hundreds of miles away in the Wolf's Lair, was instructing Himmler that these Berlin Jews were not to be liquidated.⁴⁴

ON the eastern front bitter frost suddenly replaced the autumn quagmires. Long freezing nights gripped central Europe. With them came the British bombers. The bunker at No. 20 Hermann-Göring Strasse was hung with costly paintings; there were armchairs, a bath, and air conditioning. On November 13 Goebbels told his adjutant to see to it that a piano was

Nov 16

See 44
imp 377

Nov 13

installed.⁴⁵ His children were now back, living out in Schwanenwerder with Magda.⁴⁶ But the matrimonial strains were also returning. Later in November the diary hears of Goebbels badgering an 'understanding' Hitler about 'a series of personal problems.'⁴⁷

It would be wrong to infer that he had no concern for his non-Jewish fellow Germans. He pestered Speer to provide more shelters.⁴⁸ He was the first to question whether the army had made proper provision for the coming winter.⁴⁹ The words 'met. report' began to figure on his daily agenda. He had asked the army months before, in August, if he should announce a ski collection; General Jodl had scrawled in red the flippant retort that their troops would have no time for 'winter sports.'⁵⁰ In October Goebbels suggested a public appeal for woolen garments—just in case. The High Command again scornfully turned him down.⁵¹ 'In the winter,' Jodl now said, 'we shall be warmly billeted in Leningrad and Moscow. Leave the worrying to us.' 'If we had put this in hand at the proper time,' Goebbels would write to Hitler three years later, justifying his views, 'it would have taken care of one of the worst problems we faced in the winter of 1941-42.'⁵²

DA '41
The army's quartermaster-general, the formidable General Eduard Wagner, had neglected the problem until mid-October 1941.⁵³ Over lunch with Hitler he complacently claimed that one-third to one-half of the winter equipment had already reached the eastern front.⁵⁴ He staged at his field HQ a totally bogus exhibition of this winter equipment, including wooden cabins, trench-heaters, ear muffs, and fur-lined coats and boots, and boldly invited Dr Goebbels to see it for himself. Still suspicious, Dr Goebbels asked him how much was already available, 'Enough to equip every soldier two or three times over,' lied Wagner.⁵⁵

'That's overwhelming,' Goebbels dictated the next day as Hitler and Jodl themselves visited the exhibition. 'They've thought of everything.'⁵⁶ Both he and Hitler were thoroughly taken in.⁵⁷ Hitler instructed him to send the exhibition on tour round Berlin, Munich, and Vienna. 'We had already set up the exhibition on Unter den Linden in conjunction with the Christmas Fair,' he would recall later, 'when suddenly the catastrophe overtook us.'⁵⁸ Several times after that he reminded Hitler and Göring of how General Wagner had duped them, but three years passed before Wagner, one of the July 1944 traitors, met his Maker.

AFTER his visit to Lithuania, Goebbels witnessed how ruthlessly Hitler dealt with the recalcitrant. At the party anniversary in Munich, Hitler prefaced his secret speech to the gauleiters by having Gauleiter Joseph Wagner of Bochum physically evicted from their midst: His wife had written an imprudent religious letter to a relative. The brown-uniformed audience was stunned by Hitler's little display of brutality. Viktor Lutze took in the clucking and clatter that broke out, as though a fox had just raided a chicken coop.⁵⁹ Others like Goebbels felt a frisson of approval for the Orwellian scene.

When they met in Berlin again, on November 29, Hitler's armies had

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begun to retreat for the first time. Bitterly criticizing Brauchitsch, his army commander-in-chief, he remarked that he had always opposed occupying the larger Soviet cities; he had no interest in capturing even Moscow—it was not worth it, just to stage a victory parade there. But when his offensive resumed in 1942, he promised, he would advance on the Caucasus for the oil, and he would conquer the Crimea, as a colony to be called the East Gothic gau. 'What need,' he asked, 'do we have for colonies on other continents?'

The Russian winter's savagery temporarily put paid to all these dreams. A German reconnaissance battalion reached the outskirts of Moscow in a raging blizzard, but got no further. On December 5 and 6 Stalin's armies opened their counter-offensive. German tank tracks froze to the ground; their guns jammed; their explosives fizzled and squibbed. Barbarossa had come to a standstill.

GOEBBELS did not share Hitler's hopes for a timely Japanese intervention. He expected Tokyo to sit this war out.⁶¹ But Ribbentrop secretly encouraged the Japanese to believe that if they declared war on the United States, Hitler would follow suit. When a Reuters communiqué on the night of Sunday December 7 announced that the Japanese had struck at the American Pacific fleet in Hawaii, Hitler telephoned Goebbels and said that he would leave for Berlin by train the following evening. At first Washington admitted only to having lost two battleships and a carrier at Pearl Harbor, with four more battleships and four cruisers damaged. 'That,' wrote Goebbels with satisfaction, 'is a loss of blood ... that they'll never make good.' He was thrilled by Japan's infamous act: She had had no real alternative. Acceptance of Washington's 'provocative and insolent' demands would have meant her abdication as a great power. 'The Japanese went ahead quite calmly and deliberately,' he wrote approvingly, 'and did not take any other power into their confidence.'

There could be no doubt whatsoever about Hitler's next move. 'We shall have no choice,' wrote Goebbels, 'but ... to declare war on the United States.' Now, he gloated, Roosevelt had got his war. 'Of course,' he added, 'what he's got is very different from what he anticipated. He certainly imagined that he could deal with Germany first.' War with the United States had long seemed likely, particularly since the speech by Hitler in Munich a month before.⁶² With Japan taking the first step, what Goebbels described in his hitherto unpublished diary as a 'gasps of relief' escaped the German public: The psychological terror, the uncertainty, was over.

A mood of invincibility swept over the Nazi leaders. Hitler remarked that they now had an ally, undefeated in three thousand years.⁶³ Goebbels listened to Churchill's broadcast and concluded from his delivery that he was drunk. Hearing Roosevelt's address to the Congress he remarked that he had taken care not to provoke Nazi Germany. 'But it is too late for that,' he happily dictated. 'We are now in the fortunate position of being able to pay them back.'⁶⁴

1941

He hurried round to see Hitler immediately after he arrived in Berlin at eleven A.M. on the ninth.

He is filled with joy at this fortunate turn of events [recorded Goebbels]. . . . He rightly points out that he always expected this. That's true. . . . He always expressed the view that, when the hour struck the appeasers in Tokyo would have nothing left to say. . . .

Hitler told Goebbels that he had known nothing beforehand. 'He was taken completely by surprise and, like myself, at first didn't dare to believe it.' In his estimate the Japanese now controlled the Pacific Ocean. 'The Japanese adopted precisely the right tactics by attacking right away and not getting drawn into lengthy preliminaries.' 'The Führer,' Goebbels recorded, 'is rightly of the opinion that in modern warfare it is wholly out of date, even medieval, to issue an ultimatum. Once you make up your mind to defeat an enemy you should wade right in and not hang around until he's braced himself to take your blows.'

Hitler confirmed to Goebbels that he would declare war on the United States in his forthcoming Reichstag speech, though delaying it by two or three days, hoping to score a Pearl Harbor of his own against the U.S. navy in the Atlantic. 'He has already given our U-boats unrestricted orders to shoot on sight.' Hitler postponed the historic speech one more day, telling Dr Goebbels that he wanted to work over the text with particular care. He planned to attack Roosevelt mercilessly in it—'Thank goodness we no longer have to show him any consideration,' noted Goebbels.

In Japan, Goebbels summarized the next day in his diary, Germany had at last found a worthy ally, although she could not very well harp on that without hurting Italy's feelings.⁶⁵ In the Indian Ocean Japanese aircraft trapped and sank two of Britain's proudest warships, Prince of Wales and Repulse. At lunchtime Goebbels found Hitler filled with unstilted *Schadenfreude*.⁶⁶ *malicious glee*

They were now fighting a global war. The implications were immediately thrust upon Goebbels: Tokyo, eight time-zones ahead of Berlin, pleaded for the historic Reichstag session to be held early so that Japanese listeners could hear Hitler live declaring war on America; but if he spoke too early, most American listeners would be denied that pleasure.⁶⁷ Thus the deputies were convened at three P.M. on the eleventh. Everybody knew what was in the air, but Hitler teased them for a while. He revealed that Germany's losses so far in Barbarossa were around 160,000 dead, a figure which provoked a perceptible murmur. In a mocking tone he then laid into the 'warmonger' President Roosevelt with a biting irony that had the Kroll opera house rocking with unkind laughter.⁶⁸

At his ministerial conference the next morning Goebbels again warned against encouraging excessive optimism.⁶⁹ Over lunch Hitler however expressed confidence that Japan would soon take the Philippines, Hong-kong, and Singapore.⁷⁰ With less than utter candor he described the Wehrmacht's plight on the eastern front as less dire than might at first

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seem. There was pain and suffering, he agreed, but he hoped to reach the prescribed defensive lines without serious losses. Not for the last time the unpublished diaries show Hitler and Goebbels infusing each other with fresh courage in the face of a generally darkening situation with, this time, Japan as their rising sun. Goebbels drew upon the history of the party, conjuring up heroic analogies from the early Thirties showing how they had snatched victory from those hours of defeatist darkness before the dawn.⁷¹

Addressing the gauleiters while still in Berlin Hitler opted for greater candor. He confessed that he had spent sleepless nights worrying whether he was doing the right thing in declaring war on Roosevelt. 'The Führer,' Goebbels reported to his diary, 'is convinced that he would have had to declare war on the Americans sooner or later. . . . Now the conflict in the Far East drops into our laps as an added bonus.' He viewed the battle of the Atlantic with greater confidence. Whoever won there would win the war. Hitler predicted to the gauleiters that the western 'plutocracies' would not abandon their Far East possessions, but would fritter away their forces around the world. The present impasse on the Moscow front was, he said, no more than 'an unavoidable hitch.'⁷²

Far from the comforts of Berlin, Hitler's soldiers were dying agonizing deaths in the blizzards. The injured froze to death if they were not dragged under cover within minutes. From one of his staff Goebbels received a horrifying letter describing the useless tanks, the munitions, guns, and planes being blown up by retreating troops, and the army reinforcements arriving still wearing their thin Afrika Korps uniforms.⁷³ Returning by train on December 16 to the Wolf's Lair, Hitler dictated a famous Order of the Day, forbidding his soldiers to yield even one inch of the eastern front. His generals seemed paralyzed by their own plight.

On the same day, the sixteenth, Hitler sent for Goebbels; he confided to him the next day at his HQ that he had decided to replace all three army group commanders as well—they all had 'stomach problems,' he said: *magenkrank*. It is not plain if he was being sarcastic. He revealed that he was going to take over command from their 'church-going' C.-in-C., Field Marshal von Brauchitsch. 'The more pious the general, agreed Goebbels, whose loathing of the general staff matched Hitler's, the more useless he is.'⁷⁴

There is no doubt that in the failure of these generals Goebbels saw his chance of establishing himself higher in Hitler's esteem. Before returning to Berlin he set out his own plan to rescue the eastern armies from freezing to death. He would launch a public appeal for woolen clothing. At first it seemed so unpretentious as to be almost ludicrous. But he calculated that this *Aktion* would help to take the country's mind off its other grim preoccupations. Hitler was unenthusiastic. He feared that the appeal would damage the Reich's impregnable image. Goebbels however won him round. Back in Berlin he called a joint conference with the High Command, the Post Office, and the transport and other ministries concerned. The bureaucrats expressed immediate doubts that

Dec 16

194-1942

the public would rise to the occasion. The soldiers were downright hostile. Their obstructionism only spurred Goebbels, the crippled civilian, to greater efforts.⁷⁵

Dec 20

The next day, Saturday December 20, the propaganda minister broadcast an appeal that was to go down in history. 'Particularly during these festive days,' he said, 'countless Germans at home will be conscious of the debt that we all owe to our soldiers and above all those at the fighting front.' How could they best express this gratitude? 'The responsible Wehrmacht authorities,' he reassured his listeners, 'have done everything to provide the front with adequate equipment for the winter.' He saw no point in exposing the inefficiency of the war department. Nevertheless, he purred, the front needed winter gear. 'Top-boots, padded or fur-lined if possible; warm woolen clothing; socks, stockings, waist-coats, cardigans, pullovers, and warm (particularly woolen) underwear, vests, under-pants, body belts, chest and lung protectors, all manner of head-gear, ear-muffs, mittens, kneepads'—and so the list went on.

Dec 27

On December 27 the collecting *Aktion* began. It was a huge success. The public handed in sixty-seven million items of winter gear. Now the plodding desk-generals—men, snorted Goebbels, who would not have made it above junior adviser in his ministry—refused to shift them. Goebbels then ordered the party's welfare agencies to hand out this winter gear to the raw riflemen on the railroad stations as their trains passed through Germany en route to the front. Every document testifies to the uplift which this unique *Aktion* provided for home morale, as well as for the eastern front. When Goebbels phoned his Führer on New Year's Day, he basked in the latter's praise.⁷⁶ Together he and his Führer had saved the eastern armies. Their generals had finally proved their mediocrity, and the party had shown its mettle. In that respect, Goebbels was heard to say, it was actually a good thing that the war had not ended at Dunkirk.⁷⁷

Jan 7

Over the weeks that followed, the eastern front stabilized. Hitler told him that his elderly field commanders had lost their head. Not for nothing, he said, had he spent four years as an ordinary dogface infantryman. He knew a thing or two about front-line soldiers and their nerves that their generals did not.

He is more admirable than ever,' dictated Goebbels to Otte for the diary.⁷⁸

Jan 7, '42

44: AI
De

IN New York in Berlin, I taking POWs, one barely were limits to an army,' he co American prop and their grotesque announcing the was also to be social race problems, domestic propaganda

He found it helped with his pity,' Goebbels cutting the groove his staff that Cl only blood, sweat after setbacks; Churchill's merit could be brought tune with the w it as his classic German soul⁷⁹

He would win available manp and then. When from the eastern several times du total war.⁸¹ The lavish social fi replaced three l fingers' finger they had suffered his first *Das Reich* and composed,' 'composed,' and

92 • WILLIAM LONGGOOD

1942

THE QUEEN MUST DIE • 93

their to certain inbe 117

1942

Goobbs
Speer

Books in this file
The Flying Engine Haffner

job schedule broken down into the specific number of days spent on each succeeding task. But the progression from job to job is not so precise or straightforward as it was once believed to be. Studies at Cornell University have revealed that unforeseen factors may influence or interrupt the job progression that once seemed to proceed so unwaveringly for all; it is now recognized that there is more job specialization than was formerly believed, more individualism and flexibility within the framework of conformity. Once more nature has surprises for us, a greater diversity than we assumed.

THIRTY-ONE



There seem to be castes of bees that do different tasks, but most of the jobs are temporary, though a bee can stay on a job for a fairly long time," says P. K. Visscher, a Cornell professor. Dr. Visscher paid particular attention to "undertaker bees" who remove the dead from the hive, concluding that the small corps of morticians may refuse to do other jobs and others may refuse to do theirs. He found that about 1 percent of a colony's population takes care of the dead. About an hour after a bee dies, an undertaker bee picks up the body and carries it away, flying up to four hundred feet from the hive before dropping it. He finds it remarkable that a bee can carry a body equal to her own weight such a distance. "Bees," he says, "realize that keeping a dead body around threatens the health of the other bees by carrying disease or attracting predators."

Dr. Visscher and other researchers are no longer so sure the bees are born genetically prepackaged to perform their multiple tasks on an inflexible biological timetable. Now they are

asking how bees fall heir to certain jobs. What determines which individuals will perform given tasks? Are they assigned by older bees? Is the division of labor dictated by chemical or other unknown cues? What causes an individual to stay on one particular job for a while before switching to another?

"It's a mystery," says Dr. Visscher. He and other scientists offer several theories to answer the questions they raise. One holds that a bee performs a job, becomes adept at it, and is resistant to take on other tasks with which she is less familiar. "A bee that gets good results by visiting a certain type of plant will become an expert in gathering nectar from its flower and will continue that job," he says. Another theory is that the size and weight of a bee, which can vary according to the size cell she was born in and the amount of food received as a larva, may determine the job performed, just as a human's physical build may predispose him or her to certain jobs and exclude others. A longer, heavier bee, for example, may wind up as a hive guard.

Another theory advanced upsets many existing notions about the uniform characteristics of colonies. It contends that since the queen has several mates on her nuptial flight—it was long believed that she had only one—her offspring will be a genetically mixed bag; some might have a predisposition to a particular type of job by reason of genes inherited from one father, while others might incline toward other tasks because of different characteristics passed along by another sire.

This is a revolutionary way of looking at bees, seeing them not only as an integrated unit but as individuals with personalities and eccentricities or abilities of their own. It also provides new insights into bee intelligence and personality; their job specialization and division of labor suggest that there may be more similarities between bees and human societies than was formerly thought. We may be subject to many of the same laws as bees, and that which we think is free will or choice may, in fact, be dictated by a higher power that we fail to

* Also's interest in bees
carries out his interest
in social pattern of the
human house

Man talk?
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this
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talk

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92

Box
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D.T.

196

then tell another, and she, in turn, passes it along until all are doing it? Then how does it get incorporated into the gene pattern and passed down from generation to generation, practiced by different races of bees all over the world? How did the first bee make the connection between water and temperature control? Who can explain the quantum leap from idea to practice, and then to the genetic transference of information echoing down through the ages? It is too much for me!

During a heat crisis, each bee seems to know her role, as if she had been drilled, as in civil defense or fire drills. It would be stretching things a bit to call our whimsical but vital water carriers specialists. They do not sit around waiting for a heat crisis. But there is no confusion or hesitation. The alarm is sounded. Individuals drop whatever they are up to for this new priority, scurrying to their stations, just like small-town volunteer firemen quitting their jobs to answer a fire alarm.

Here we have what appears to be a spontaneous new division of labor. How do the individual bees know what they are supposed to do, what is expected of them? Who carries water and who fans? Are we to believe this is all neatly packaged in some little gene marked "heat crisis, instructions therein"?

During a heat crisis, field bees may make a hundred trips or more gathering water. Each can carry only a tiny amount at a time, and after transferring it to a hive bee they zip away for more. It must be a time of high drama; you can sense the urgency as the fielders shuttle back and forth from water source to hive, and hive bees race to and fro smearing the dabs of water on the combs. No military operation could be better synchronized.

There is, for all of the drama, a comic side, all of this running back and forth. Eventually the hive is cooled down. The crisis is over. The hive bees return to their regular tasks, but to one, it seems, bothers to tell the field bees the emergency is over. They keep appearing with their mouths full of water, looking desperately for someone to take it from them. The busy hive bees ignore them. It is, apparently, a breakdown in com-

munications. Nature, or evolution, it would seem, could have taken the next logical step and had someone inform the foragers that they could return to the fields. Would that have taken so much more space in the gene package? Or does nature, at times, enjoy mocking her own, playing small jokes, some of them amusing, some grisly and horrible.

The division of labor is never quite so coordinated and unified as when all hands fan together. This is a vital function in curing honey. Nectar, when brought into the hive, contains about 80 percent water, and most of the moisture must be reduced to approximately 18 percent to produce thick honey. At night, after the runny nectar has been deposited in open wax wats, like so many miniature barrels stacked row upon row on their sides, the comb cells tilted slightly upward so their contents won't spill out, the colony gathers at the hive entrance to evaporate the water by fanning.

Half of the colony is on one side, beating their wings in unison to blow air into the hive, while the other half fans on the opposite side, creating a breeze that carries water vapor from the nectar out of the hive. How do the bees decide who is to blow in and who is to blow out? The draft produced is so strong that if a lighted match is held at the hive entrance, the flame will bend in the direction of air being forced in or out. The method is so effective that puddles of water often are found on the inner cover after a night of fanning.

During a honeyflow, nectar must be processed immediately so the honey can be capped in preparation for the next day's collection. In the summer bees often work around the clock, field bees bringing in nectar for twelve straight hours and then fanning for the next twelve, rapidly wearing out those wings, which have only so many beats in them. There is no division of labor now, other than those who blow in and those who blow out. There are no individuals; there is only the common good to be served.

*D.T. Sometimes I wonder
if that were some species
of hell.*

146
143
Station

fan
142

1901

1930

1942

1943

9A

33

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

to society and "public decency." They should all be handed over to the Gestapo and severely punished:

942

1942 K

241

Experience shows that unnatural offenders generally turn into homicidal maniacs; they must be rendered harmless however young they may be. I have therefore always been in favor of the strongest possible punishment of these antisocial elements.³¹⁷

Other aspects of Hitler's personality also fit what we know to be true about the psychopathology of sexual perversion. The infantilism we have found in him is one necessary ingredient. For as Freud was first to notice, "perverted sexuality is nothing else but infantile sexuality, magnified and separated into its component parts." Infantilism is clearly marked when, as with Hitler, the perversion involves a reversion to the anal stage.³¹⁸ Hitler's harrowing childhood memories of his primal scene experience and his monorchism clearly qualify as prerequisites for adult perversion, as set forth by the distinguished child psychoanalyst Phyllis Greenacre. "If I were to attempt a formula describing the development of perversion," she has written, the primary cause would lie in a disturbed mother-child relationship, "especially [one] involving the genitals. This becomes most significant . . . when castration anxiety is extraordinarily acute."³¹⁹

1890

Too much
excited
too much
enthusiasm
on a
clean
also

Psychoanalysts have shown that the mothers of boys who become sexual perverts often were overly stringent about toilet training. As we have noted, Klara Hitler had a reputation in Leonding and Linz for having had "the cleanest house in town" and keeping her children "absolutely spotless." It is interesting, and perhaps in this connection suggestive, that in one case of perversion described by an American analyst, the patient showed an identification with his mother: he displayed a desire "to have his sweetheart urinate in his presence while he encouraged her in a friendly way. He was playing the role of his mother who used to put him on the chamberpot when he was a baby."³²⁰

In his chapter on perversion in his standard work on psychoanalytic theory, Otto Fenichel lists three basic characteristics: patients with perversions tend to be infantile; they have unreconciled Oedipus complexes; and they all display castration anxiety. Indeed, Fenichel concludes: "Castration anxiety (and guilt feelings which are derivatives of castration anxiety) must be the decisive factor."³²¹ Adolf Hitler's lifelong concern about castration has already been mentioned perhaps too often.

If the clinical literature is correct in concluding that Oedipal problems, sadomasochism, infantilism, and castration anxiety are the marks of perversion, then Hitler certainly had all the chief symptoms. But there is a more specific reason why Adolf's symptoms were so intense and why a sexual perversion of the kind described was, psychologically, an appropriate response to sexual problems dating from his

1930?

242
R.F.T.

Indeed, how well he knew
might take a look at (241) where he
convinced that castration in photographs
have to be seen?

The Child As Father to the Man

earliest years. The combination of trauma had given Adolf Hitler sexual intercourse. He saw it that must be avoided. He could his sexual energies in deviate

As with other issues raised, certain that Hitler had the admitted that traditional history in saying that they can find it was sexually normal. But the tary evidence of uncertain rhetorical data.

In short, we conclude that ladies urinate or defecate on this perversion not because pletely convincing but because dence. The perversion fits al and public performance. It was his grandiose moralistic public ridden self which pleaded for pulse for self-punishment, we to have historic consequences.

Thus did the evils done man. We leave him now to conditions which helped bring him achieve a political goal without personality, time, and place. None can be understood apart

In following the course of fateful meeting with Adolf Hitler there was in the past that he the context of his times, the balanced man became a politician

Klara goes
from clean to
super clean
after Adolf's
birth.

check
notes on
P241

Important

D.T. We can imagine Alois' habits in bed as a young girl that married. No wonder she was so spotlessly clean - she always had to scrub him scrubbing him another mouth. With laundry soap. The baby's mother had a very sweet breath.

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AH
conciliatory and diplomatic; his victories were rarely won by charm, and the bitterness which marked his life after his dismissal was already apparent in the hour of his greatest triumph in January 1871 ("I frequently had the strong wish to become a bomb and explode, so that the whole structure would collapse," he wrote to his wife from Versailles three days after the emperor's proclamation). One is tempted to speculate that Bismarck felt even then that he had overshot the goal he had reached in 1867, that he had allowed himself to be carried away by his alliance with the Nationalists, that he had achieved something that could not work and that in the long run would prove to be untenable. The deep pessimism with which he viewed his accomplishments is unmistakable, and that letter refers to the domestic condition of the Reich as well as to its foreign relations.

His domestic battles with the parties and the Reichstag became increasingly venomous. In 1867 he was still in comparatively high spirits when he proclaimed before the (then North German) Reichstag: "Let us put Germany into the saddle, so to speak! It will be able to ride." In 1883, quoting himself dispiritedly, he retracted this earlier optimism in a letter to Albrecht von Roon: "This nation cannot ride! . . . I say this without bitterness and very calmly: I see black for Germany's future." This passage refers to the domestic, not the external situation. But externally he felt oppressed

1944
AH

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advance. The

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1941-1942, 1944-5

Germans were determined to leave nothing but
scorched earth behind. And the world will never
forget the horror of the Final Solution, which be-
gan in 1941 in the occupied Soviet territory and
in 1942 was extended to all of occupied Europe.

There were still moments in 1942 and 1943
when a desperate, suffering Russia appeared will-
ing to let Hitler get out of the war in the East by
a cease-fire if he were to withdraw to the old line
of demarcation or the old German borders. Hitler
never agreed to that—and in effect one can forget
about all these conjectures. They never were se-
riously considered.

*
Stalin
nope

The only question that must still be asked
about the second half of World War II is why Hit-
ler, in a situation with no prospect of victory and
once his enemies, after some bickering, had
reached agreement on Germany's unconditional
surrender and carried the war into Germany, held
out amid the ruins of Berlin until his last-minute
suicide—and even managed to find fanatics ready
to impose his will on a terrified populace.

Two theories have been advanced. According
to one, Hitler never wavered in his belief in final
victory. After all, in his own political life he had
miraculously bounced back time and again. Per-
haps he hoped that the East-West alliance would
disintegrate at the very moment of victory, per-
mitting him to make a separate peace with one
and defeat the other. There is much to be said for
such a scenario. In the winter of 1944-45 he still

1941 + 1942

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enough to

invade the continent in concert with England. But
once Hitler had done Roosevelt the favor of de-
claring war on the United States, Germany's de-
feat could no longer be staved off. Why then did
he do it? *see p 230 (D.T.)*

Even if this question cannot be answered une-
quivocally, some thoughts do offer themselves.

In July 1941, after his great initial successes,
Hitler thought that the war against Russia was in
the bag. At that moment, when the first step to-
ward Germany's defeat had in fact already been
taken, Hitler developed plans that went far beyond
his original idea of incorporating Russia into the
German sphere. That July he decided to cut back
his buildup of the army, formerly a priority item
because of the planned attack on Russia, in favor
of a major naval expansion. As far as Hitler was
concerned the war against the Soviet Union had
already been won, and he was preparing for a
worldwide blitzkrieg in which a big navy and air
force would neutralize the United States before it
could reach its full strength.

Not only did these grandiose plans never
reach fruition, they never even got as far as the
projected naval buildup, because beginning in
1942 the war against Russia once more moved to
center stage. Still, those plans existed, and perhaps
they even lived on in Hitler's head until the end
of 1941. In a heedless moment he may even have
believed as late as December 1941 that he could
still fall back on them, since America seemed to

41, 42

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um Dictated in 1946
I Alfred Jodl on
ilitary Leadership

of the Operations Staff of the dictated this memoir, which he n the Leadership of the War (strategist)," to the wife of his oner at Nuremberg—excepting dictated later to his own wife, h. The tone of the addendum, orthand, is understandable in felt.¹

istory of Alfred Jodl's life will c of the general who was con- al Military Tribunal and exe- 946. He felt constrained—if I : this mask by virtue of the officer, and out of respect for erceived far better than others, ief memoir demonstrates—he e n which he awaited execution.

imself did not think his condemna- ript of the proceedings will agree t he expected to be hanged in the

That Alfred Jodl, at the bottom of his heart, no longer believed in victory after the winter campaign of 1941–1942, and certainly not after Stalingrad the following winter, has already been mentioned. His tragedy was that he felt morally obligated, as a mat- ter of official responsibility, not to divulge what he thought. Con- sequently, he moved sharply against anyone who arrived at the same conclusion. To General Walter Warlimont, his closest associate, he once said, in response to a skeptical remark, that Warlimont really belonged in a concentration camp. *scant*

[To grasp the full implications of Alfred Jodl's role is to perceive the frightful fate of those discerning General Staff officers who felt duty bound to be loyal to their Chief of State and Supreme Com- mander, who saw through and despised him as an autodidact but at the same time were fascinated by his "sixth sense," and in the end were condemned before the world as his accomplices.²

²Most revealing in this context is a note Jodl wrote on February 25, 1946, while imprisoned at Nuremberg, which was copied and graciously made available to me by his widow. In it he explains the motivation behind a speech which he delivered in autumn 1943 to an assembly of National Socialist party leaders in Munich. The drafts and documents he had assembled for this presentation, presented in evidence as Document L-172 at Nuremberg and reprinted in the *War Diary*, were not the final text of the speech, as Jodl himself pointed out to the court.

"I have the impression," he wrote, "that my speech of November 7, 1943, is causing the defense a great deal of concern.

"How it came about I have already explained.

"Not only I but dozens of officers have spoken before that circle—after my speech, for example, two other officers—because Hitler attached the greatest importance to mutual understanding between party leaders and officers.

"I also explained further that in Document L-172 the core [of the speech] dealing with the purely military presentation is lacking; only the trimmings are there. They had to express courage, confidence, faith, unity of will and action.

—In 1914–1918 I had experienced how front and homeland, soldier and worker, the leadership of the state and that of the people by the political parties had grown further and further apart in their thinking, until finally the state in the homeland collapsed and dragged the armed forces down in defeat and revolution as well. This experience remained so vivid that in the Second World War, I made it a guiding principle to do everything in my power to combat every division, every indication of breakdown—in short, all domestic conflicts insofar as they might affect the Wehrmacht. Each such manifestation at home would have provided fertile soil for effective enemy propaganda and

1941/1942

east immediately after the end of the eastern campaign.⁵³ Even so, the deportations began from Germany outside Berlin on October 15 and from Berlin on October 18. The first convoys went to Łódź, Minsk, and Riga. The first German Jews were shot near Kovno on November 25.

Both Rudolf Höss, the commander of Auschwitz, and Eichmann testified after the war that they were told by Himmler in the summer of 1941 that Hitler had ordered the final solution of the Jewish question. Höss was not pressed to be more specific. Eichmann specified that it had been about two or three months after the war against the Soviet Union had begun and that Hitler had ordered the physical liquidation of the Jews without, however, specifying which Jews were to be liquidated first.⁵⁴

Thereafter the operation was no longer kept entirely secret. On November 16, 1941, Goebbels wrote in a lead article in his weekly newspaper *Das Reich* that Hitler's prophecy on January 30, 1939, of the destruction of the Jewish race in Europe was now coming true.⁵⁵ Two days later Rosenberg confidentially told a press conference of the biological extermination of European Jewry as a whole.⁵⁶ On December 14 Hitler agreed with Rosenberg that it was not appropriate to speak of extermination in public.⁵⁷

On November 29 Heydrich sent out invitations to the Wannsee Conference scheduled to take place on December 9.⁵⁸ It was postponed later to January 20, 1942. The invitations were accompanied by copies of Göring's authorization of July 31, 1941. The importance of the Wannsee Conference should not be overrated. No decisions were made at the conference; its purpose was the briefing of officials and coordination of government agencies. One of its objectives may have been the inclusion of West European Jews in the final solution. On March 27 the first convoy of French Jews left Drancy, France, for Auschwitz, where mass killings had begun in February 1942.

1942, 1941, 1939

Hitler Orders the Holocaust

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In four public speeches during 1942 Hitler reminded his listeners of his so-called prophecy of destruction of the Jews of Europe. Unlike Goebbels, who always dated it correctly from January 30, 1939, Hitler invariably misdated it to September 1 of that year. On that day, when the war against Poland began, he had also spoken in the Reichstag but he had not mentioned the Jewish question at all. There can be no doubt that the misdating, which was repeated in the printed versions of the speeches, was deliberate. Evidently he wanted the extermination of the Jews to be seen in connection with the beginning of the war.

We need not enter into the later stages of the Holocaust in order to answer our questions. Apparently not just one order was given to initiate it. And apparently its beginnings involved considerable inconsistency, improvisation, and confusion.

This has led some of the so-called functionalist historians to infer that the whole operation may not have been ordered or premeditated at all. In order to avoid misunderstandings it should be stressed that Martin Broszat, who has developed this thesis most explicitly, does not deny Hitler's responsibility for or approval of the killings. Broszat's thesis is only that they were proposed and initiated by others as well, that they were not planned long in advance and initiated by a single secret order.

There is some evidence for such an interpretation. On July 16, 1941, a relatively early date, officials close to the *Reichsstatthalter* in Posen, in the annexed Polish territories, asked Eichmann to consider seriously whether instead of letting the Jews starve, it would not be more human to dispose of those who could not work by a rapidly effective means.⁵⁹ Is it not logical to infer—that is the functionalists' question—that the final solution evolved gradually out of such proposals and the resulting individual killing operations?

My first answer is that there is no evidence that there were many such proposals or individual killing actions, and cer-

* The point of the Holocaust (as seen by the O.O.) is that the immune act itself will dispirit humanity and drive them into more and more superficial & extensive developments

19 42

'43, '44

Hitler Orders the Holocaust

57 B

tainly not prior to the spring of 1941. Until that date, with the exception of the killings during the invasion of Poland in 1939, all officials in charge of the Jewish question, from Göring and Himmler to Heydrich and Eichmann, were fully involved in emigration, evacuation, or deportation, and there is no evidence that any one of them proposed or envisaged a different procedure. On the other hand, there is a great deal of evidence that at least some of them were shocked or even appalled when the final solution went into effect. To be sure, they did not disagree with it. But they agreed only reluctantly, referring time and again to an order given by Hitler. This is a strong indication that the idea did not originate with them.

In his secret speeches in 1943 and 1944 Himmler lamented many times that this order had been a burden for him, the hardest challenge of his life, or even the most dreadful task, the most dreadful order that could be assigned to an organization.⁶⁰ When Goebbels learned of Globocnik's action in the death camp of Belzec near Lublin, where mass killings in gas chambers had begun shortly after March 16, 1942, Goebbels wrote in his diary on March 27 that the procedure was barbarous, that Hitler's prophecy was coming true in the most dreadful manner, and that "the führer is the unrelenting protagonist and advocate of a radical solution."⁶¹ Rosenberg, apparently after having been briefed by Hitler on the same question, noted in his diary on April 2, 1941, the stunted sentence: "What I do not want to write down today but will never forget."⁶²

Before producing further evidence that Hitler was the prime and only instigator of the Holocaust, I shall briefly return to the killings in Poland in 1939. Again there is no evidence that they were proposed or initiated locally or by subordinate agencies. On the contrary, in a note of July 2, 1940, Heydrich described them as a political operation carried out by Himmler according to instructions (*Weisungen*) from Hitler, and he mentioned the term order (*Befehl*) twice.⁶³

* Obviously a clue

1941, 1942

Hitler Orders the Holocaust

61 B

seen from the improvisation of killing methods after June 1941 that the technical question was far from having been solved by then.

The enormous difficulties facing the implementation of the final solution should suffice to explain the lack of coherence in its execution. There is no need to draw the conclusion that it was the spontaneous result of situations that had developed. Could it not have been in Hitler's interest or been his intention to create the situational confusion in order to overcome the difficulties involved? Whether this was the case or not, the difficulties suggest a departure from our conventional notions of how decisions are made and orders issued.

In this respect we must now include in our consideration what we said earlier about the ambiguity of Hitler's anti-Semitism. That was the principal and most fundamental difficulty. His desire to exterminate the Jews was in conflict with his desire to win the war. He was just as unable to set his priorities when preparing the Holocaust as he had been when he had formulated his goals in the 1920s. As we have seen, Göring seems to have recognized the problem when he said that it was more important to win the war than to implement racial policy. Hitler was unable to understand this view and still tried to demonstrate that the Holocaust did not compromise the chances of victory. This inability also and most basically contributes to explaining the lack of coherence in his policy.

There is further evidence of this in the later course of events. In 1942 Hitler's task became easier as the course of the war began to set his priorities for him. On November 8 he said in a public speech in Munich:

You will recall the session of the Reichstag during which I declared: If Jewry should imagine that it could bring about an international world war to exterminate the European races, the result will not be the extermination of the European races, but the extermination of Jewry in Europe. People always laughed about me as a prophet. Of

1941, 1942, 1945

B 62

Hitler Orders the Holocaust

those who laughed then, countless numbers no longer laugh today, and those who still laugh now will perhaps no longer laugh a short time from now. This realization will spread beyond Europe throughout the entire world. International Jewry will be recognized in its full demonic peril; we National Socialists will see to that.⁶⁸

* It should first be noted that Hitler used the formulation "international world war" as he had earlier, on September 30 of that year. This pleonasm was, of course, ridiculous unless Hitler wanted to differentiate between a national world war for living space and an international world war against the Jews. This may indeed have been his intention.

Furthermore, we must remember that in the course of that autumn of 1942 the second assault against the Soviet Union had failed, like the first, and the American invasion of North Africa had just begun. Yet according to Hitler's earlier plans, Russia was to have been vanquished by 1941, before the United States was ready for war. Thus there were definite reasons for Hitler to wonder if the war perhaps could not be won. Hitler would, of course, not admit this in public. But he may have felt that if he could not acquire new living space for Germany, he might at least achieve something for humanity. As the fortunes of war turned against Germany, Hitler became more and more convinced that the destruction of the Jews was his gift to the world. This became totally clear toward the end of the war. In a dictated memoir on February 13, 1945, Hitler said, "I have lanced the Jewish abscess, like the others. For this, the future will be eternally grateful to us." And again in his last words recorded on April 2 in his bunker in Berlin, "The world will be eternally grateful to National Socialism that I have eradicated the Jews in Germany and Central Europe."⁶⁹

For the last time we return to the question how and when the decision was made. There can no longer be a reasonable doubt that it was made by Hitler. But how are we to envision

* See p 61 ⊕ the reason he did not see it as a conflict is that the "demonic peril" was upon them - one could hardly expect for the Jews to weaken other nations,

1936, 1937, 1940, 1942, 1944

of daily life, but then bolstered by foreign policy successes and later by military victories. Perhaps these responses were all too human, but still it seems to have been characteristic of this regime that it was more likely to win approval from the populace by diverting its attention from misery than by actually ameliorating conditions. Diversions of an intoxicating kind (presented in exactly that fashion) were abundantly available. Rarely has a generation been exposed to so many sensational new things in so few years.

The "Olympics, Spain, and the result of the London talks," states a report of August 1936, "are having a salutary effect on the morale of the populace and are helping us to smooth over all sorts of unpleasant things."¹⁴ In the following year, when relatively little happened, morale evidently reached a low point. "A sense of discontent among the people is stronger than ever," stated a report of May 1937. "The National Socialist government is being held responsible for the shortage of raw materials."¹⁵ The annexation of Austria then sparked "jubilation and joy." During the Sudeten crisis, "fear of war" reigned supreme, and after Munich there was once again "an elated mood."¹⁶

It is well known that the outbreak of war was greeted with little enthusiasm and with great apprehension. Nonetheless, a report on the events of June 1940 states that the victory in the west brought about "a degree of solidarity never hitherto achieved among the entire German people."¹⁷ After this high point, things went slowly downhill again. The uncertainty of the course of the war, the increasing food shortages, and the air raids on German cities prompted a pessimistic mood that set in during the summer of 1942 and, after the battle of Stalingrad, shaded into doubt and resignation and finally into a still hopeful fatalism. The daily struggle for existence and survival displaced politics and dominated all other considerations. It should be noted, however, that the assassination attempt of July 20, 1944, was not only, with few excep-

tured by statistics. From time to time public referendums were held, but there was nothing to vote for between the registers of "yes" and "no." Even the officially announced election results, which very early recorded up to one-quarter "no" votes in some places, are unreliable, for falsification of election results is clearly documented in many cases.

But even when a nation is no longer polled, can no longer vote, and has lost the right to express opinions freely, public opinion still exists and can, within limits, be investigated. Even a dictator—especially a dictator—is in his own interest eager to know what his subjects and above all his enemies among those subjects think of him. Under Hitler, a kind of comprehensive polling of public opinion arose from the police surveillance and control of so-called ideological enemies and was incorporated into an extensive set of reports. These reports, which were collected and evaluated by several agencies but with especial zeal by the SD, the security department of the party, tell us more about public moods than about opinions. For the regime wanted above all to know whether morale was good or bad. It was not disposed to heeding the opinions of the populace; it intended to rule, and for that it needed popularity, as Hitler himself had stated.

It goes without saying that the utmost care must be used in drawing conclusions from reports on morale. Not that things were glossed over in the reports; that would have made them worthless. In the end they so dismayed the leadership that Bormann prohibited them in the summer of 1944.¹³ But there is a certain arbitrariness inherent in them. Statistical evidence of any precision is missing; reports often pertain only to certain parts of the Reich, and the spies did not, of course, find out what people were afraid to say. The result is an impression, not a definitive conclusion; a portrait of moods, not of opinions.

Generally speaking, one can say that morale fluctuated in a peculiar way. It was lowered principally by the economic cares

1942

hour, in no way had the same fate. From this point of view he thought that twins provided the best evidence. He always vigorously rejected the proposition that the fate of individuals depends upon their stars or constellations.

Nevertheless the prediction made by a Munich fortune-teller (Ebertin) in the very first years of his struggle for power greatly impressed him. It seemed her predictions had fulfilled themselves in every respect. But Hitler only spoke very ironically about this coincidence and considered the whole thing a joke.³⁴

If Fraulein Schroder's comments are correct, it would appear to indicate Hitler's knowledge of astrology was, indeed, slight.

In an indirect way Hitler demonstrated his attitude toward the subject in one of his table talks in 1942, where he began by sneering at what he calls the great faith the Anglo-Saxon in particular has in horoscopes. He went on to describe horoscopes as swindles whose significance must not, however, be underestimated.

Just think of the trouble given to the British General Staff by the publication by a well-known astrologer of a horoscope foretelling final victory in this war for Germany. All the newspapers in Britain had to dig out all the false prophecies previously published by this eminent quack and reprint them before public anxiety could be pacified!³⁵

Hitler went on to make the type of statement that often is found on the lips of archskeptics: "In judging any question connected with superstition it must be remembered that, although an oracle's prophecies may be wrong a hundred times (when they are promptly forgotten), it suffices for one prophecy to be fortuitously confirmed by subsequent events, for it to be believed, cherished, and handed down from generation to generation."³⁶

At the time of these comments the "uncontrollable crisis" predicted by Ebertin had been well and truly triggered.

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Führer, Hitler had never lacked belief in the truth of the picture he was projecting. As success followed upon success the element of calculation was completely overshadowed by the conviction that he was what he had so long claimed to be, a man marked out by Providence and endowed with more than ordinary gifts. The image he had himself created took possession of him until he became the last victim of his own propaganda.

The success of his intervention in checking the Russian counter-offensive exalted his sense of mission and his confidence in his military genius. After the winter of 1942 he was less prepared than ever to listen to advice—or even information—which ran contrary to his own wishes. This was the reverse side of the strength which he derived from his belief in himself—and it was the weakness which was to bring him down, for in the end it destroyed all power of self-criticism and cut him off from all contact with reality.

Now that he had taken over the direction of operations himself, Hitler believed that 1942 would infallibly produce the knock-out blow which had eluded him the previous year, and he began to draw up his plans for the new campaigning season. When Halder told him that the Army Intelligence Service had information that six or seven hundred tanks a month were coming out of the Russian factories, Hitler thumped the table and said it was impossible—the Russians were 'dead'.

The German Army had come through the winter without a major disaster, but at a heavy price. Casualties numbered 1,168,000, not counting the sick; out of the 162 divisions on the Eastern Front, only eight were ready for offensive operations at the end of March. Despite these losses, Hitler issued emphatic orders to prepare for a resumption of the offensive, with the south as the principal theatre of

April 1942

War-Lord, 1939-45

operations and the oil of the Caucasus, the industries of the Donbass and Stalingrad on the Volga as the objectives.

The Home Front, no less than the Army, needed its faith in the Führer's leadership restored, and in the first four months of 1942 Hitler found time to make three big speeches.

In his speech of 26 April, Hitler, with the winter now behind him, gave the fullest expression to his renewed faith in Germany's eventual triumph. This time he made no attempt to conceal how near the German Army had been to disaster. He deliberately exaggerated the seriousness of the situation on the Eastern Front in order to throw into more effective contrast his own decision to assume personal responsibility and the news that the crisis had been mastered. Then, picking up the allusion to Napoleon's Retreat from Moscow, so often invoked during the winter, he added: 'We have mastered a destiny which broke another man a hundred and thirty years ago.'

Hitler's picture of the conditions under which the Army had fought in the east during the past few months was a prelude to a demand for still greater powers to be vested in himself, the counterpart on the Home Front to his decision to take over the personal conduct of operations on the Eastern Front.

The law, duly passed by the Reichstag without discussion, proclaimed: 'The Führer must have all the rights demanded by him to achieve victory. Therefore—without being bound by existing legal regulations . . . Führer must be in a position to force, with all the means at his disposal, every German, if necessary . . . to fulfil his duties. In case of violation of these duties the Führer is entitled, regardless of rights, to mete out punishment and remove the offender from his post, rank, and position without introducing prescribed procedures.'

Hitler's request for a confirmation of the arbitrary

The Unachieved Empire,

power which he already found puzzling. The explanation of 1942 is to be found in Goebbels the Minister of Propaganda of the shortcomings of the nation, and of the failure of the economy and civilian life to support the war. During his visit to Goebbels pressed Hitler to measures to control war production, to increase production of staffs of overgrown ministries and manpower.

Goebbels and Hitler laid their criticisms on the conservative Service and judiciary. But the penalty for treating the State as 'spoils' for the Nazis to power. The Nazis remain in power, gangsters, spivs, and in control of the resources of a great state that they had not ruined at the end of the war with their corruption. The fact that they did not have the virtues and organizing abilities of the officials of the civil service, industry, who, however much they serve their new masters with cility.

Hitler was the last man to be without administrative gift work and indifferent to corruption at the same time far too jealous of any effective delegation of his powers.

In the 1930s Hitler spoke of the 'Order of Leadership' whose members had its membership an unbroken continuity fitted to undertake the duties of the State'. On closer inspection

* D.T. Force majeure - I was beginning to admire him

-Lord, 1939-45

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The Unachieved Empire, 1941-3

April 1942
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power which he already possessed is at first sight
puzzling. The explanation of the decree of 26 April
1942 is to be found in Goebbels's diaries, in which
the Minister of Propaganda continually complains
of the shortcomings of the state and party adminis-
tration, and of the failure to organize German eco-
nomy and civilian life to meet the demands of 'total'
war. During his visit to headquarters in March,
Goebbels pressed Hitler to adopt much more drastic
measures to control war-profiteering and the black
market, to increase production, reduce the swollen
staffs of overgrown ministries, and provide additional
manpower.

Goebbels and Hitler laid the blame for these short-
comings on the conservatism of the German Civil
Service and judiciary. But they were only paying
the penalty for treating the administration of the
State as 'spoils' for the Nazi Party once it had come
to power. The Nazis remained what they had always
been, gangsters, spivs, and bullies—only now in con-
trol of the resources of a great state. It is astonishing
that they had not ruined Germany long before the
end of the war with their corruption and inefficiency.
The fact that they did not was due to the stolid
virtues and organizing ability of the permanent
officials of the civil service, of local government and
industry, who, however much abused, continued to
serve their new masters with an unquestioning do-
cility.

Hitler was the last man to remedy this situation.
Without administrative gifts, disliking systematic
work and indifferent to corruption, Hitler was at the
same time far too jealous of his authority to make
any effective delegation of his powers.

In the 1930s Hitler spoke of the Party as 'a chosen
Order of Leadership' whose task was 'to supply from
its membership an unbroken succession of personal-
ities fitted to undertake the supreme leadership of
the State'. On closer inspection the new élite was far

- I was
admired by

from impressive. Even amongst the Reich leaders of the Party there were few men of ability, integrity, or even education. One of the exceptions was Goebbels. Göring, too, undoubtedly displayed ability in 1933-4, but by 1942 this had long been overlaid by the habits of indolence and the corruption of power. Men like Ley, Ribbentrop, Funk, Darré, and Rosenberg were wholly unfitted to hold positions of responsibility.

In February 1942, however, Hitler had the luck to make one of the few good appointments he ever made. Albert Speer, whom he chose as Minister for Armaments and Munitions was a young architect. Disinterested as well as able, he soon showed himself to be an organizer of remarkable powers and was entrusted with one job after another until he became virtual dictator of the whole of German war production. Finding himself faced with great difficulties in the way of procuring manpower from the obstruction of the Gauleiters, Speer shrewdly suggested that one of them should be made responsible for increasing Germany's labour force. This led in March 1942, to the appointment as Plenipotentiary-General for Manpower of Fritz Sauckel, a former sailor, who was Gauleiter of Thuringia. The powers given to Speer and the use he made of them produced a sensational rise in German war-production in 1942 and 1943 without which Hitler could never have continued the war at all.

To make good the German losses in manpower, Hitler demanded more of the satellite states. The bulk of the new divisions were to come from Rumania and Hungary. But Hitler now began to ask for the Italian troops which he had scorned to accept the year before. He had not seen the Duce since August 1941 and, now that the winter crisis was over, he thought it desirable to remove any doubts in Mussolini's mind and to revive his flagging faith in an Axis victory. Accordingly the Duce and Ciano again

set out for the north and spent two days with Hitler.

Ciano reported that Hitler but he was even more in discussions followed far back Mussolini complain Hitler had asked them to meet at his own residence tinged with the uneasy Germans, would have to overconfident Hitler.

Before the attack on Raeder's proposals for a Mediterranean, with the plans after Russia was forced to send strong Mediterranean theatre, through 1941-2, the sole purpose defensive, to prevent an Africa. At the end of the turned to the attack and Hitler's interest in the Mediterranean of the grandiose way in the 'Great Plan') was directed the Middle East to join the element of Britain's Asiatic to a two-fold operation to serve as the prelude to the of the desert offensive against beyond to Persia; and the to the security of Rome.

The operations began with of Tobruk and the invasion 1942, a month after the Afrika Korps reached the five miles from Alexandria a curious reluctance to undertake the plan, the assault on Malta

War-Lord, 1939-45

the Reich leaders of ability, integrity, or options was Goebbels. ed ability in 1933-4, overlaid by the habits of power. Men like and Rosenberg were of responsibility.

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The Unachieved Empire, 1941-3

Summer 1942

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set out for the north at the end of April 1942, and spent two days with Hitler at Salzburg.

Ciano reported that Hitler looked tired and grey, but he was even more impressed by his loquacity. The discussions followed familiar lines, and on the way back Mussolini complained that he could not see why Hitler had asked them to make the journey. Resentment at his own reduced role was beginning to be tinged with the uneasy fear that he, as well as the Germans, would have to pay for the mistakes of an overconfident Hitler.

Before the attack on Russia Hitler had evaded Raeder's proposals for intensifying the war in the Mediterranean, with the promise to take up these plans after Russia was defeated. Although Hitler was forced to send stronger forces to the Mediterranean theatre, throughout 1941 and the winter of 1941-2, the sole purpose behind these moves was defensive, to prevent an Italian collapse in North Africa. At the end of the winter, however, Raeder returned to the attack and succeeded in rousing Hitler's interest in the Mediterranean, largely because of the grandiose way in which the plan (known as the 'Great Plan') was dressed up as a drive through the Middle East to join the Japanese in a vast encirclement of Britain's Asian Empire. Hitler agreed to a two-fold operation for the summer of 1942 to serve as the prelude to the 'Great Plan': the renewal of the desert offensive against Egypt, Suez, and beyond to Persia; and the capture of Malta, the key to the security of Rommel's supply route.

The operations began well with Rommel's capture of Tobruk and the invasion of Egypt. By 30 June 1942, a month after the offensive had opened, the Afrika Korps reached the El Alamein line, only sixty-five miles from Alexandria. But Hitler showed a curious reluctance to undertake the second part of the plan, the assault on Malta. He proposed to starve

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r Force. Raeder was not al-

lowed to establish a naval air force, nor was he able
to secure the effective cooperation of the Luftwaffe in
attacks on British shipping, harbours, and shipyards.
Göring, who was on bad terms with the Commander-
in-Chief of the Navy, was a law unto himself, and
Hitler simply let the quarrel between the two Serv-
ices drag on.

Up to February 1941, Raeder found it impossible
to keep more than some six U-boats at sea at a time.
By the end of 1941 this had been increased to sixty.
With these limited forces the U-boats achieved such
remarkable successes in 1942, sinking over nine hun-
dred vessels, that Hitler was converted and began to
talk of the U-boats as the factor which would decide
the outcome of the war. When Raeder demanded that
no workman engaged on U-boat construction or re-
pair should be drafted for military service, Hitler at
once agreed, and more than three hundred U-boats
were completed during 1942.

But Hitler's interest in the possibilities of the
U-boats came too late. Although the shipping losses
between the beginning of 1942 and the spring of 1943
taxed the Allies to the limit, they now had at their
disposal resources which Hitler, deeply committed in
Russia, could not hope to equal. The Battle of the
Atlantic, which might—as Raeder had so often argued
—have been decisive, was destined to prove one of his
greatest failures. It was a failure which sprang from
his defective grasp of the war as a whole and which
was confirmed by the decision to invade Russia, a
campaign into which a disproportionate amount of
Germany's resources in men and machines was drawn
at the expense of every other front.

On the third front, the western seaboard of Europe
and Northern Africa, Hitler was not blind to the
threat of an Anglo-American landing, but the prob-
lem of how to defend so vast a coastline was one to
which he never found a satisfactory answer. More-

over, from the autumn of 1941, he displayed a growing conviction that Britain and the U.S.A.—possibly in cooperation with Russia—were planning a large-scale assault on Norway.

There was little enough evidence to support such a view, but so impressed was Hitler by his intuition that virtually the whole of the German surface fleet was concentrated in Norwegian waters. Not until 1943 was Hitler prepared tacitly—but never openly—to admit that he had been wrong. By then the Allied armada had safely landed an army in north-west Africa, unmolested by the German naval forces a thousand miles away to the north, where they remained vainly keeping guard against an attack which never came.

Against a much more ominous threat from the west which began to develop in 1942 Hitler found himself without adequate defences. The German Air Force, already roughly handled in the Battle of Britain, never recovered from the demands made on it in Russia. The first thousand-bomber raid by the R.A.F., on Cologne, took place on the night of 30-31 May 1942, and it was a portent for the future. The war was beginning to come home to Germany.

Hitler had chosen the south as the main theatre for his operations on the East Front in 1942, and powerful German forces drove fast down the corridor between the Don and Donetz rivers. While one wing pushed east towards the Volga at Stalingrad, the other drove past Rostov and, covering another four hundred and fifty miles, reached the Caucasus and the more westerly oilfield round Maikop in the first half of August.

Hitler moved his H.Q. to Winniza, in the Ukraine, during July, and from here he followed the progress of his armies with mounting excitement. Now, he declared, his faith and determination in the winter had been justified: Russia was on the verge of defeat.

Hitler, however, made a mistake. He had made the year before. To increase German strength, he did not let the Luftwaffe have the objective, to reach the Volga, but tried to break into the Caucasus oilfields as well, thus dividing his forces by gaining neither Stalingrad nor the end of July, when the 4th Army had probably have taken Stalingrad. It was diverted south to the Caucasus. When it was clear the Russians had gathered strength at Stalingrad. By September the German offensive was beginning to assume the form of a desperate Halder doubt whether its cost was worth the effort or the risks. For the official association with Stalin made the Russians as eager to take it. As the Germans moved forward they exposed their flank to grave danger of a massive counter-attack across the Don.

Halder's attempts to point out the dangerous situation led to a repetition of the mistakes of the previous autumn and winter. The General Staff of cowardice, reports of growing Russian strength for a massive counter-attack.

Even a child could see the weakness of the armies he was leading, but Hitler refused to let go. He knew such forces existed. When he was breaking off of the attack at Stalingrad, Hitler dismissed him and reformed the Army General Staff with a younger man without Halder's authority.

Meanwhile, the thrust into the Caucasus halted short of the main oil-

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Hitler, however, made exactly the same mistake he
had made the year before. Overestimating the Ger-
man strength, he did not limit himself to his original
objective, to reach the Volga and capture Stalingrad,
but tried to break into the Caucasus with its valua-
ble oilfields as well, thus dividing his forces and end-
ing by gaining neither Stalingrad nor the oil. At the
end of July, when the 4th Panzer Army could prob-
ably have taken Stalingrad without much difficulty,
it was diverted south to support Kleist's drive for
the Caucasus. When it was freed to return north the
Russians had gathered sufficient strength to hold
Stalingrad. By September the battle for Stalingrad
was beginning to assume proportions which made
Halder doubt whether its capture was worth the ef-
fort or the risks. For the city's name and its histori-
cal association with Stalin during the Civil War
made the Russians as eager to defend it as Hitler
was to take it. As the Germans fought their way
forward they exposed their long-drawn-out north-
ern flank to grave danger from a Russian counter-
attack across the Don.

Halder's attempts to point out the dangers of the
situation led to a repetition of the scenes of the pre-
vious autumn and winter. Hitler accused the Gen-
eral Staff of cowardice, ridiculing the Intelligence
reports of growing Russian strength in preparation
for a massive counter-attack.

Even a child could see the use Stalin was likely to
make of the armies he was building up behind the
front, but Hitler refused categorically to admit that
such forces existed. When Halder recommended the
breaking off of the attack at the end of September,
Hitler dismissed him and replaced him as Chief of
the Army General Staff with General Kurt Zeitzler,
a younger man without Halder's experience or au-
thority.

Meanwhile, the thrust into the Caucasus had been
halted short of the main oilfields by stiffening Rus-

Nov 1942

War-Lord, 1939-45

sian resistance. Hitler, beside himself with impatience, sent Jodl to investigate. When Jodl, on his return, ventured to defend the Commander-in-Chief in the Caucasus, Field-Marshal List, Hitler flew into another of his fits of fury. What particularly angered him was Jodl's citation of his own earlier directives to prove that List had only been obeying orders.

From that day on Hitler refused to eat any more with his staff officers at the common table. For several months he declined to shake hands with Jodl, and on 30 January 1943 he sent word that he was to be replaced. By a rare stroke of irony, Paulus, the man Hitler chose as Jodl's successor, the next day surrendered to the Russians at Stalingrad.

By the autumn of 1942 all Hitler's urging could not alter the fact that the German advance at Stalingrad, as well as in the Caucasus and North Africa, had been brought to a standstill. For the first time since he had proclaimed Germany's rearmament in 1935, more than seven years before, the initiative passed out of Hitler's hands, never to return.

On the night of 23 October 1942 the British 8th Army under General Montgomery attacked the German lines at El Alamein and after twelve days' heavy fighting broke out into the desert beyond.

On the night of 7-8 November British and American troops landed along the coast of Morocco and Algeria, and within a few days occupied the whole of French North Africa as far as the Tunisian frontier.

On 19 and 20 November three Russian Army Groups under the command of Generals Vatutin, Rokossovsky, and Eremenko attacked on a huge front north and south of Stalingrad and within five days succeeded in encircling twenty-two German divisions between the Volga and the Don.

Taken together, these three operations mark the turning-point in the war and the seizure of the in-

The Unachieved Empire,

initiative by the Allies. He was forced to stand upon the

Hitler's very success in the winter of 1941-2. His one idea was to stand. Rommel flew back to Germany and told Hitler that the only course was to get the. In Italy, Hitler shouted at the. He and his troops cowards orders, however, neither could halt the Allies' advance.

The Allied landings in 1 November took Hitler. He immediately summoned Laval to Munich. Hitler bluntly told the Germans would occupy the. With the rest of Unoccupied Italy, Solani had his way over France. In a position to derive much. Italy was too obviously the. North Africa.

After his long neglect of the. He began to pour troops and supplies in order at all costs to hold a bridgehead at Bizerta. In something of a. Hitler to come to terms with. He shortened his lines on the East. The greatest number of divisions in the Mediterranean and the west. He ignored. Hitler was determined. He was equally determined not to do so elsewhere.

Meanwhile the Russians were. The net round the German Sixth Army. The formula which had proved successful in the previous winter was monotonously repeated. Fight to the last man. Hitler's attempt to break the ring from

War-Lord, 1939-45

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When Jodl, on his
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Hitler's urging could
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1942 the British 8th
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The Unachieved Empire, 1941-8

Winter 1941-42

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initiative by the Allies. Henceforward Hitler was
forced to stand upon the defensive.

Hitler's very success in halting a German retreat
in the winter of 1941-2 now proved a fatal legacy.
His one idea was to stand firm at all costs. When
Rommel flew back to Germany at the end of Novem-
ber and told Hitler that Africa was lost, and the
only course was to get the Afrika Korps out to fight
in Italy, Hitler shouted at him that he was a defeat-
ist and his troops cowards. Despite his categorical
orders, however, neither Rommel nor anyone else
could halt the Allies' advance.

The Allied landings in French North Africa in
November took Hitler completely by surprise. He
immediately summoned Laval and Ciano for a meet-
ing at Munich. Hitler bluntly informed Laval that
the Germans would occupy Tunisia at once, together
with the rest of Unoccupied France. At last Mus-
solini had his way over France, but he was no longer
in a position to derive much satisfaction from it:
Italy was too obviously the Allies' next target after
North Africa.

After his long neglect of the Mediterranean Hitler
began to pour troops and supplies into Tunisia in
order at all costs to hold a bridgehead covering Tunis
and Bizerta. In something of a panic Mussolini urged
Hitler to come to terms with Russia, or at least
shorten his lines on the Eastern Front, so that the
greatest number of divisions could be moved to the
Mediterranean and the west. These suggestions were
ignored. Hitler was determined to hold Tunisia, but
he was equally determined not to give up anything
elsewhere.

Meanwhile the Russians methodically tightened
the net round the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad.
The formula which had proved successful the previ-
ous winter was monotonously repeated: Stand and
fight to the last man. Hitler refused to let Paulus
attempt to break the ring from the inside. No con-

G 406 Aug 1942

War-Lord, 1939-45

territories for the strengthening and relief of the German war economy. This had been foreseen in the economic directives drawn up before the invasion, and was continually reaffirmed by Göring and others. In a conference on 6 August 1942 Göring, as Plenipotentiary for the Four-Year Plan, told the commissioners for the occupied regions: 'It used to be called plundering. But today things have become more genteel. In spite of that, I intend to plunder and to do it thoroughly.'

As the bombing of German industry and the losses of manpower and equipment began to exert a greater strain on the German economy, so the demands on the eastern territories mounted. These demands were not limited to raw materials, food, and machinery, but extended to manpower as well. Russia, like Poland and the other occupied countries in the west, France, Belgium, and Holland, was turned into a vast labour camp to provide the human material which German industry and agriculture needed. The organization of this new slave traffic was in the hands of Sauckel, and the brutality of the methods by which men, women, and children were rounded up, shipped to Germany and forced to work, often under unspeakable conditions, beggars description.

But even the five million Russian, Polish, French, Dutch, Yugoslav, and Italian workers did not satisfy Hitler. He constantly increased his demands on Sauckel, who in turn urged the local authorities to apply the most ruthless measures to secure more manpower.

Hitler's policy in the eastern occupied territories, however, was only in part determined by Germany's immediate economic needs. Under cover of the occupation he was determined to lay the basis of a German settlement in the lands between the Vistula and the Urals. Colonies of settlers from Germany and from the German minorities in other countries were to be established in Poland and European Russia, each settlement being linked by a network of military

It happens that people know when large men of flesh and blood

The Unachieved Empire,

roads and protected by S. points, whose task was not frontiers after the war but in permanent subjection slave labour for the industry of the new German Empire.

The tasks of Himmler, for the Strengthening of Germany, defined as the elimination of what presented a danger to the Reich Community, and the for settlements from return racial Germans abroad. To Himmler set up special departments outlined his programme in his S.S. commanders which were of Hitler's plans for the future.

The most interesting of we have a record is one which S.S. Oberguppenführers : 1943. He began by insisting on ruthlessness. 'One basic principle rule for the S.S. men: we loyal, and comradely to men and nobody else. . . . Whether we prosper or starve to death it is of no interest to me. Russian females fall down digging an anti-tank ditch as far as the anti-tank ditch for us. We shall never be rough and not necessary, that is clear. the only people in the world with an attitude towards animals, will have an attitude towards these human beings. crime against our own blood and give them ideals. . . . C is our people and our blood. W

Oct 1943

1942

War-Lord, 1939-45

everything else. I wish the S.S. to adopt this attitude to the problem of all foreign, non-Germanic peoples, especially Russians.'

In passing, Himmler mentioned the extermination of the Jews: 'Most of *you* know what it means when a hundred corpses are lying side by side, or five hundred or one thousand. To have stuck it out, and at the same time—apart from exceptions caused by human weakness—to have remained decent fellows, that is what has made us hard.'

Among the particular duties of the S.S. was that of organizing the concentration camps. In 1942, Himmler, with Hitler's agreement, began to use these as a source of labour for armaments work, and the S.S. established its own factories. Certain categories of prisoners were agreed upon as suitable 'to be worked to death'. Among other uses to which concentration-camp prisoners were put was to serve as the raw material for macabre medical experiments by S.S. doctors.

The work of guarding the concentration camps and carrying out the brutal sentences of flogging, torture, and execution which were everyday occurrences was allotted to the S.S. Death's Head Units (Totenkopfverbände). In a speech which he delivered to S.S. leaders at Metz in April 1941, Himmler described such work as 'fighting the sub-humanity. This will not be a boring guard duty, but, if the officers handle it right, it will be the best indoctrination on inferior beings and the sub-human races.'

More terrible even than the concentration camps were the extermination camps. The largest of these was Auschwitz in Poland, where the four large gas chambers and crematoria were capable of a rate of extermination far above that of the others like Treblinka. Rudolf Höss, a member of the S.S. Totenkopfverbände since 1934, served in concentration camps for eleven years. From May 1940 to December 1943 he was at Auschwitz. In his affidavit he says:

The Unachieved Empire,

'I was ordered to establish at Auschwitz in June 1941 to find out how they carried The Camp Commandant dated eighty thousand in year. He was principally all the Jews from the monoxide gas and I did were very efficient. So at B, which was a crystall into the death chamber. I minutes to kill the people to climatic conditions. They were dead because they usually waited about half the doors and removed the ~~were removed~~, our specifications and extracted the ~~corpses~~. Another improvement Treblinka was that we could accommodate two thousand

Even the facilities at the demands made on the days during the summer of 1941 and 300,000 Hungarian Jews at the camp and the S.S. to relieve the pressure on

When the invasion of Himmler recruited four Einsatzkommandos to carry out the Jewish population functionaries. Otto Ohlendorf, Security Police (SD), Gruppe D in southern Russia that 90,000 men, women, dated by his formation during the victims were made to which they were thrown at. In the spring of 1942, he

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

TWO JULYS

1943-4

ply gas vans for mobile
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Jewish people by the S.S.

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inister sites of Auschwitz
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The immediate consequences of the Stalingrad disaster were not so great as might have been expected, and did not lead to a collapse of the German front in the east. The Russian attempt to cut off the army in the Caucasus was defeated by a skilfully conducted retreat. Moscow was relieved, but Leningrad remained under German shell-fire. When the winter fighting came to an end the German line, although withdrawn in the centre and the south, was still deep in Russian territory. It was not until the late summer of 1943 that the Russians renewed their attacks. By that time Hitler was faced with an even graver situation in Italy.

Hitler's rapid decision to seize Tunisia in November 1942 proved effective in balking the Allies of victory before the end of that year. The news from Italy, however, made him anxious: the Duce was ill, dislike of the Germans was widespread, and the one ambition of the Italian people was to get out of the war as soon as possible.

Something must clearly be done to stiffen his failing ally, and at the end of February 1943 Hitler sent Ribbentrop on a visit to Rome with a long personal letter to the Duce, following it with an agreement to allow the Italian workmen in Germany to return home—a considerable concession at a time when Sauckel was mobilizing the labour resources of the rest of Europe to work for Germany. But Mussolini, ageing, sick, and disillusioned, was fast losing control of the situation. Mass strikes in Turin and Milan, with the slogans 'Peace and Liberty', were a

gust they retook Orel, on 23 September they 25th Smolensk.

exible orders to stand firm, was to double the commanders of any defence. As the year dily pushing the Germanian frontiers.

ally in the south, had discussions. As the Red frontiers, fear began to s, Rumania, Hungary, o the Axis had been Italy. Hitler, already the possibility of land- with anxiety.

much as for military suggestion of withdrawal e Eastern Front, and the Crimea at the cost n. When he was urged ons in the Aegean and don the islands would impression. To avoid we may even have to troops and material.'

Allies had not yet at- w two heavy blows to e U-boats and the in- against Germany. In an naval losses, Hitler will to fight and run y's U-boat specialist, ief of the Navy in ies strengthened their attack, the figures for

U-boat losses began to rise, and at the end of May Dönitz was driven to withdraw all his vessels from the North Atlantic.

Hitler was no longer blind to the importance of the Battle of the Atlantic, but he lacked the resources to support it. Increased production of U-boats could only be at the expense of other equally urgent needs. By the end of 1943 the Battle of the Atlantic was lost.

During 1943 the American day-bombers joined the R.A.F. in keeping up an almost continuous offensive against targets in Germany and Western Europe. The scale of the raids began to rise too.

Hitler, worried most about the effect on German war production, was beside himself with fury at the failure of Göring and the Luftwaffe to fend off the attacks or to satisfy his demand for reprisals on Britain.

In 1938 and 1939 Hitler had been warned by Schacht and others that Germany had not the economic resources to wage another war. By 1943 the accuracy of these warnings was obvious. There was an increasing shortage of everything—manpower, raw materials, transport, oil, food, steel, armaments and planes. Even if the German people could withstand the strain of the air war, the effect on war production was such that it must in the end place Germany in a position of permanent inferiority.

Thus, if the last months of 1942 mark the turning-point of the war, 1943 may be taken as the year of Germany's defeat.

Hitler was now in his fifty-fifth year. The strain imposed on him by the war, particularly since the winter of 1941-2, had begun to leave its mark. During the course of 1943 he began to suffer from a trembling of his left arm and left leg, which became steadily more pronounced and refused to yield to any treatment. In an effort to control this tremor, Hitler

ir-Lord, 1939-45

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Two Julys, 1943-4

(1942), 1944 427

had no longer any confidence in him, and Göring kept out of his way.

The last of the original leadership, Joseph Goebbels, was both able and tough. He was a genius as a propagandist, but his cynical intelligence and caustic tongue did not make him popular in the Party. In the early years of the war, Hitler became very cool towards Goebbels, partly because of the scandal caused by his love affairs, partly out of mistrust of his malicious wit, but the later years, which marked the eclipse of Göring, saw Goebbels steadily rise in favour.

As early as 1942 Goebbels began to campaign for a more drastic mobilization of Germany's resources. This was a clever line to adopt when many people in responsible positions were beginning to hedge. He won back Hitler's confidence, and became one of the few men with whom Hitler could still exchange ideas.

Goebbels saw well enough the disaster which threatened Germany, and in 1943 and 1944 tried to persuade Hitler to consider a compromise peace. When this came to nothing he was too intelligent to suppose that there was any future for himself apart from Hitler, and instead of turning against the Führer he began to out-Herod Herod in his demands for still more drastic measures. It was Goebbels who, in 1945, proposed that Germany should denounce the Geneva Convention and shoot captured airmen out of hand, and who persuaded Hitler not to leave Berlin. His passion for self-dramatization was aroused by the idea of fighting on to the end, however hopeless the position, and he was the one member of the original group who joined Hitler in suicide in the Berlin bunker.

Of those who became prominent after 1933 only three are worth more than cursory mention: Himmler, Bormann, and Speer. Himmler's rise dated from 1934; in the following ten years he acquired sole

seven Camille Corots, three Honoré Daumiers, four Claude Monets, five Renoirs, a Vincent van Gogh, an Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and assorted sketches and watercolors, all from the collection of "the Jew Paul Rosenberg" and all "eminently suitable for swapping." Since Beltrand had valued them *above* their original asking price, Hofer had insisted on paying the latter. Currency agents, he further reported to Göring, had impounded Georges Braque's personal art collection at Bordeaux, but here there was a snag: Braque was not a Jew, so they would have to release his collection. "I have dealt with him in person about his Cranach of a girl," wrote Hofer, knowing of Göring's weakness for this painter. "And I have hinted that the collection may be restituted to him more quickly if he agrees to part with the Cranach to us!!!" Nazi agents had also discovered in Paris a Rubens and an Anthony Van Dyck. "I am having inquiries made whether the owner is a Jew," Hofer notified Göring. "Meanwhile the paintings remain in the bank's safekeeping."

By October 20, 1942, no fewer than 596 paintings, sculptures, tapestries, and articles of furniture would have found their way from the Jeu de Paume into Göring's possession.

Italy rivaled France and Holland as the sources of Göring's fabulous art collection. In October 1938 General Italo Balbo had transported to Carinhall an antique marble copy of the Venus of Praxiteles, excavated at Leptis Magna near Tripoli. As Mussolini's own military misfortunes began, at the end of 1940, he became eager to ingratiate himself with the Germans. In January 1941 Hofer arranged for him to give to Göring eight large Vipiteno paintings for his birthday. "I can imagine how surprised and pleased Hermann must have been," wrote Frau Hofer, congratulating her husband on the deal. "Without you he would never have got those paintings. What kind of lunch did you get [from Göring]? It was Hot-Pot Sunday. I'm surprised that Goebels was there too—they must have buried the hatchet."

To evade customs duties, his agents routinely underdeclared the values, with the connivance of Mussolini himself. In November 1941 the export office at Rome was shown a manifest of thirty-four sealed crates of art bound for Carinhall, allegedly worth a mere two hundred thousand lire (or roughly \$1,000 in 1941). In fact, the crates contained two Canaletto landscapes, works by Spanish, Venetian, and Florentine masters, furniture, and a marble relief of the Madonna and Child; the fifteen largest of these items had been purchased by Hofer from a Florentine antiquary on May 29 and October 20, 1941, for 12.5 million lire. In July 1942 this kind of customs fraud would be repeated with sixty-seven crates packed with antique sculptures and bas-reliefs.

To his harassed secretary Gisela Limberger would fall the job of keeping track and creating inventories of her boss's objects d'art and of the palaces and villas where they were currently displayed or stored. But the fate of the Paul Rosenberg collection shows the kind of problem she faced. Wanting to

* He has images of himself in lastly history reflected as the founder of the Goering Museum

send his wife to safety in S
Göring allowed Miedl to tra
to Switzerland instead. Hof
paintings to Miedl for 750,
Fräulein Grundtmann paid M
Rosenberg pictures reached I

Fräulein Limberger's task
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Paintings by Jan Vermeer V
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Then a third "Vermeer" sur
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"The Road to Emmaus," whic
had cleaned it, showed the sa
Vermeer, as the one on offer to
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one. Thus reassured, Göring c
lesser works including 54 mil
for the coveted "Vermeer."

Years later, with less than si
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the master forger Hans Van M
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pained Hermann Göring, "that
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You say it isn't? I regard it as
told the embarrassing truth. "It
I paid most of all for that one!"
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you up," the Americans told hir
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and a "Rembrandt." "That was
a very stiff price for the Rembra
added, becoming visibly pensive.
He added, "I think my own expe
careful when you associate wi
themselves—I noticed that myse

As works of art were acquired
rowed, loaned out, traded, transfer

Oct 1942

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This capitulation was typical of the Hitler-Göring relationship. Although Major von Below, Hitler's air-force adjutant, had noticed an estrangement during the Battle of Britain, he observed that Hitler continued to consult his air-force chief on any major initiative for three more years. Not that he felt bound to heed Göring's advice: As Ribbentrop would write in August 1945, once Hitler had made up his mind, nobody—"not even Göring with his overbearing influence"—could change it for him.

Göring hated the developing Nazi plan to attack Russia. In vain he canvassed his own strategy, for a concerted action by German, Italian, and Spanish forces to seize the British Empire's fortress at Gibraltar and capture the Suez Canal, thus sealing off the Mediterranean. After that he proposed they occupy the Balkans and North Africa. Hitler would not listen, and invited the Soviet foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, to Berlin for one final parley before making up his mind. Göring and Ribbentrop entertained the Soviet potentate at the Kaiserhof Hotel on November 12, but the price that the stocky little Russian shortly stated for further Soviet collaboration took Ribbentrop's breath away: The U.S.S.R. now demanded Finland, Romania, and Bulgaria, control of the Dardanelles Straits—and more, because when British bombers arrived over Berlin after dark that night, Molotov confidentially stated to Ribbentrop in the air-raid shelter beneath the Reich Chancellery a demand that made the Nazi leaders tumble out of their seats, as Göring later put it. Moscow now insisted on being awarded naval bases on the North Sea outlets of the *Baltic*. "I told them," Ribbentrop haughtily assured the Reichsmarschall, "that there could be no talk of that."

By the next day, November 13, Hitler's decision had hardened. The high command's diary shows that Russia was among the three topics that he discussed with Göring. One was raising an airborne corps, a second was whether or not to capture Cap Verde, the Canaries, and the Azores, and the third was the mounting of an assault on Gibraltar under General von Richthofen's command, prior to an "eastern campaign" that might begin thereafter on May 1, 1941.

It must be said that Göring's motives for opposing Hitler's Russian campaign were economic rather than moral. Nazi Germany was dependent on Soviet deliveries of grain and oil, and on the Trans-Siberian Railroad. He urged Hitler to concede all of Molotov's demands except for the outrageous claims in the western Baltic, pointing out slyly that these Soviet advances would bring Moscow into open and direct conflict with London. The Wehrmacht, he argued, could hardly march all the way to Vladivostok. Besides, Hitler himself had argued in his *Mein Kampf* against fighting a war on two fronts. "There is only one front," Hitler retorted stolidly. "That is in the east." Göring disagreed, but Hitler steamrolled his arguments aside. "Listen," Bodenschatz heard him say. "I'll only need your bombers in the east for three or four weeks. Then you'll get them back. When we've finished

Nov 1942

TH

off Russia, the army will be mechanized divisions, and the air force. It's going to be tri

Göring allowed himself to parroted the Führer's argument Adolf Galland that that "in ten weeks" that can come. When General Thomas base beyond the Ural mountains too. My airborne troops will our links to the Far East." "marschall, describing Hitler's 1945, and added, "as always

Four years later Bodenschatz became "infected" with the general, Göring's longtime friend in him."

On November 14, 1940—the the air force that Göring built Coventry, pathfinding by the Luftwaffe's high command had no sequent autumn and winter air for Britain. But Göring was summoned the young chief of air staff Sperrle, and Stumpff were at the and Milch was deputizing for the a lot that needs doing," cursed. in a private diary entry on November schall we have to act on our own

It seemed a bizarre way to ruin Galland found themselves getting nurse, Christa Gormanns, cancel attacks on others. The Reichsmarschall one of Fräulein Limberger's gift retained nine different doctors and was playing up, and licentious exhaustion is clear from a long letter by a princely courier (Victor, prior after his departure for East Prussia

I am currently taking several at the very end of my tether

Hitler-Göring relationship. Although Ribbentrop had noticed an estrangement so that Hitler continued to consult his for three more years. Not that he felt Ribbentrop would write in August 1945, nobody—"not even Göring with his" it for him.

plan to attack Russia. In vain he carried out action by German, Italian, and Japanese forces at Gibraltar and capture of the Mediterranean. After that he proposed to attack Africa. Hitler would not listen, and Vyacheslav Molotov, to Berlin for one day. Göring and Ribbentrop entertained Molotov at the Hotel on November 12, but the price Ribbentrop stated for further Soviet collaboration with the U.S.S.R. now demanded Finland, the Rock of Gibraltar, the Straits of Gibraltar—and more, because Berlin after dark that night, Molotov was the air-raid shelter beneath the Reich Chancellery. Nazi leaders tumble out of their seats, insisted on being awarded naval bases. "I told them," Ribbentrop haughtily replied, "there could be no talk of that."

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was for opposing Hitler's Russian campaign. Nazi Germany was dependent on the Trans-Siberian Railroad. He was making demands except for the outrageous price he paid out slyly that these Soviet advances would lead to direct conflict with London. The Wehrmacht had to go all the way to Vladivostok. Besides, the *Kampf* against fighting a war on two fronts. Hitler retorted stolidly. "That is in the hands of the Führer. I'll only need your bombers in the east to get them back. When we've finished

off Russia, the army will be cut back to thirty Panzer divisions and twenty mechanized divisions, and the remaining manpower will be packed into your air force. It's going to be tripled, quadrupled. . . ."

Göring allowed himself to be persuaded. Over the next few weeks he parroted the Führer's arguments to Pili Körner, he revealed to Fighter Commander Adolf Galland that the Luftwaffe was to attack Russia shortly, but that "in ten weeks" that campaign would be over and Britain's turn would come. When General Thomas reminded him of Stalin's growing industrial base beyond the Ural mountains, he replied, "My air force will smash that too. My airborne troops will seize the Trans-Siberian Railroad and restore our links to the Far East." "He got me to help him," recalled the Reichsmarschall, describing Hitler's persuasiveness with a thin smile in August 1945, and added, "as always."

Four years later Bodenschatz would suggest that men like Göring had become "infected" with their own life-style. "He has Carinhall," the general, Göring's longtime friend, observed. "And that's the cancer within him."

On November 14, 1940—the night that he handed over power to Milch—the air force that Göring built fire-bombed the British industrial city of Coventry, pathfinding by the new electronic beams. Perhaps, if the Luftwaffe's high command had not been so geographically far flung, the subsequent autumn and winter air offensive might have been really dangerous for Britain. But Göring was sulking at Rominten in East Prussia. He had fetched the young chief of air staff, Hans Jeschonnek, to his side. Kesselring, Sperrle, and Stumpff were at their widely dispersed Luftflotte headquarters, and Milch was deputizing for the Reichsmarschall at la Boissière. "There's a lot that needs doing," cursed Jeschonnek's deputy Hoffmann von Waldau in a private diary entry on November 16, "and for want of the Reichsmarschall we have to act on our own."

It seemed a bizarre way to run a modern air force. Milch, Waldau, and Galland found themselves getting orders dictated by phone from Göring's nurse, Christa Gormanns, canceling night raids on one town and ordering attacks on others. The Reichsmarschall's health was clearly indifferent. From one of Fräulein Limberger's gift lists it seems that at one time or another he retained nine different doctors and physicians to minister to him. His heart was playing up, and licentious living had debased the human tissues. His exhaustion is clear from a long letter that he sent to Count Eric von Rosen by a princely courier (Victor, prince zu Wied) on November 21, a week after his departure for East Prussia:

I am currently taking several weeks' convalescent leave as I was at the very end of my tether. I'm spending it with Emmy and

Edda here at my hunting lodge at Rominten, getting away from everything that's going on and summoning up strength for the year to come.

Göring's letter also leveled a thinly veiled warning at the Swedes, whose newspapers were reporting Berlin's air-raid damage in grotesquely exaggerated language. "Coventry," he gloated, "has been completely and literally razed to the ground. London has suffered immense damage, and entire districts look like they've been hit by an earthquake." By November 1, he claimed, his Luftwaffe had dropped 15,872 tons of bombs on London; but the British had succeeded in dropping only 31 tons on Berlin. Criticizing Stockholm's "bourgeois press," he added, "If Sweden believes that the freedom of her press is more important than her own future, so be it. But Sweden must not be surprised later on if, one day, Germany draws the appropriate conclusions."

In a paragraph marked "Confidential" he dropped a hint about Russia that he asked Count von Rosen to pass on to Finland: "Your Finnish friends," he wrote, "can rest assured about the future—even after Molotov's visit to us." He had sent an agent to Field Marshal Mannerheim several weeks earlier about this, and the same agent would visit him again, in a few days' time. Meanwhile Göring said that he welcomed the signs that the Finns had been shrewd enough to abandon their former policies and move closer to the German line.

Göring allowed little to disturb his East Prussian vacation. Once, he languidly directed Jeschonnek to phone orders through to Milch to bomb Liverpool and Manchester at once, whatever the moon, and to deliver "a heavy blow at London" in between.

On December 3, Milch and Waldau brought out to Rominten the plans that they had drafted on Hitler's instructions for a Luftwaffe Air Corps to be moved to southern Italy to help extricate Mussolini from his own military quagmires in North Africa and Greece. Göring still loathed the Italians in general and Mussolini in particular. "If I were a Frenchman," he had sneered when Mussolini belatedly entered the war in June, "I should spit on the ground every time I saw an Italian." But every Italian setback now just boosted British morale, so Göring had to approve the rescue plan.

"Wet autumn day," wrote General von Waldau in his diary. "A very nice heart-to-heart with the Reichsmarschall, most of it in the shooting brake that conveyed us to the feeding place of the world-record stag, Matador."

For a while the raids on Britain continued—against London, Birmingham, Liverpool, and Sheffield. Over Christmas, however, Hitler, of all people, ordered a festive lull in the mutual killing match. The British, not to be outdone, did the same. From his East Prussian retreat Göring was inspired by the Christmas spirit to send bank books to the children of airmen killed in action, each with a deposit of one thousand marks from his own bulging

account. By the end of it *Barbarossa*, a possible attempt to force a "brisk conclusion."

As a military band sent New Year arrived at Rominten. Celsius. Göring's red-leath notes neatly entered in blue moment of his day. Typical twice for an hour with Edda on sleigh rides, inspecting supervising Fräulein Limbe in his private cinema or play through the forests with Paul his physician, Dr. von Ono against the British Isles and Air Corps against the British.

He savored the approach the arrangements with Göring to express surprise at all the and obsequious Dino Alfieri early fifteenth-century altar of Swabian master Hans Multscher wood carvings.

The birthday itself passed in a moment paraded in drifting snow. Göring's favorite gourmet restaurant staged the comedy *Cherries for Mystery* did, however, mar the Emmy had given him vanished entered grimly in his diary. "In Arrayed in a red silk dressing the piles of packages, his face He changed into a pure white complexion was flushed with and that she had telephoned a claim it's still in the building!"—Göring

His diary outlined the events. P.M., "Conference with Kömer, diary shows that he warned of a "Detective finds stolen cigarette stuffed it down a sofa." (2:00 P.M.) my birthday presents. 3:30 P.M., advisers Jeschonnek, Milch, and with the Führer, operational matters

28 WARNING BRITAIN ABOUT BARBAROSSA

Throughout the spring of 1941 Hitler's planned conquest of eastern territories cast its nightmarish shadow over his principal lieutenant. Along every ministerial corridor in Berlin could be heard the echo as *Barbarossa* approached with ponderous tread, and none dared stand up to the Führer long enough to talk him and his eager army out of it. The coming operation intruded on Hermann Göring's contentment as he cruised the galleries of Amsterdam, as he unpacked the crates of artworks at Carinhall, and as he briefed his agents to scout the treasure-filled bazaars of Switzerland and Italy, of France and the Low Countries, for anything that he might have missed himself. But for Hitler's *Barbarossa* plan, Göring would have had few cares: His air force was operating with merciless precision against its English targets; his own wife and infant daughter were safe at Rominten in East Prussia; and out there the stags and wild boar awaited with ill-concealed impatience the arrival of the quaintly clad Reich master huntsman.

But the nightmare remained. And one fact, as the actual day approached, would demonstrate the depths of his despair at Hitler's deliberate opening of a second front. Hermann Göring would leak to the British both the fact

Spring 1942

WARNING BRITAIN

and the actual date of *Barbarossa*—of which Hitler was surely not av

The German Army high command, and Göring could not count either. Relations with the navy's warships were having to operate over, when Raeder now complained vacationed in Paris—that the British control of the Luftwaffe's KG40, on exploded with fury and summoned Karl Dönitz, from his Paris headquarters upon the admiral's remarks: "distinctly unfriendly." "You can," "As long as I live, or until I resign, get a fleet air arm." Pointing out the state," he threatened that even on KG40 he would not be likely to planes. "I need FW 200's too," he

After leaving France on February 9 to soothe his tattered nerves by cruising of days, those at The Hague and Amst loot from the Jeu de Paume loaded to Berlin. Here, on February 11, he Hitler out of attacking Russia, asking the renewal of the Soviet trade economic disadvantages of fighting both grain and petroleum.

Without waiting for the result, Göring next days hunting stags, stalking elk,

In the second half of February 1941 necessary evil. Riding his train south to fully discussed Germany's alternative plan his principal expert on Romanian oil. He advocate the benefits of capturing the Soviet on February 19 he lunched at Hitler's E in private conclave with Hitler and General Hitler robustly stated that if anybody else drawbacks of *Barbarossa*, he was going the point of attacking Germany," he n "then economics don't come into it."

Still uncomfortable, Göring reminded

July 1942

had called for until further discussions. In any case, Heydrich would be assassinated a few weeks later, before any such document could be drafted.

The documentary record shows that the initiative for specific atrocities came from Nazi officials in the field. Even Hitler's own role is thrown into question by recently discovered documents, and verbatim conference transcripts show Göring to have been aware of the Führer's less rigid attitude. Two days after visiting Hitler on July 4, 1942 he presided over the first session of the new Reich Research Council. Here Göring expressed anger that although the Führer had expressly forbidden it, Jewish scientists were being taken off vital research:

I've just briefed the Führer about this. We have exploited one Jew in Vienna for two years, and another in the field of photography, because they've got things we need of the utmost value to us at this time. It would be madness to say, "He'll have to go! Of course he's a great researcher, a fantastic brain, but he's got a Jewish wife and can't be at the university, and so on."

The Führer has made similar exceptions all the way down to operetta level.

sec 9 34

A month later Göring could have heard Rosenberg telling the assembled gauleiters this, according to the stenographic record: "The solution of the Jewish problem continues apace . . . It can only be solved by rigorous and ruthless force. [*Storms of applause.*] We ought not to rest content with Jews being shipped from one state to another, leaving Jewish ghettos here and there. Our aim must be the old one: the Jewish problem in Europe and in Germany will not be solved until there is not one Jew left on the European continent. [*Lively applause.*]"

Such harsh words were not, of course, uttered in a vacuum. The whole trend was toward illegal and brutal modes of war—toward innocenticide on a grand scale. Violent air raids had resumed. The partisan warfare developing in Russia was barbarous beyond belief. Millions were starving too. At the same conference Göring evidently asked what food the Jews in Riga were getting, because the local Nazi official there, Reich Commissar Hinrich Lohse, corrected him: "Only a small fraction of the Jews [of Riga] still live." He continued, no less ambiguously, "Tens of thousands are gone."

"All cruelty," protested Hermann Göring, first confronted with evidence of the Nazis' atrocities, "was abhorrent to me. I can name many people whom I have helped, even Communists and Jews. My wife was so kind—I really have to be grateful for that. I often thought, if only the Führer had a sensible wife who would have said to him, 'Here's a case where you can do some

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good, and here's another, and this one—' That would have been better for everyone. It was very depressing for me."

Göring's policy on the Jewish relocation program after Hitler's invasion of Poland is only rarely glimpsed in the archives. His brother Albert had asked him over dinner once during those months, and Hermann had replied that he favored awarding a large area of Poland (with Warsaw as its capital) to the Jews, who would be collected there from all over Germany, Austria, and Czechoslovakia—a huge, autonomous ghetto. No other Final Solution ultimately evolving in the east is even hinted at in the thousands of pages of Gömnert's files as Göring's office chief, let alone in the Air Ministry or Four-Year Plan files. Gömnert's files reflect the Reichsmarschall, albeit often cautiously, investigating every instance of Nazi heavyhandedness reported to him. He forwarded the grosser cases of excess to Philipp Bouhler for review. Bouhler's staff, however, usually rejected the complaints. In one case, when the Ministry of the Interior classified Baroness Elisabeth von Stengl as a Jew, Göring's staff redirected her indignant protest to the bureau. In vain—she was "relocated" (*umgesiedelt*). Göring again protested on her behalf, which drew a reply from Adolf Eichmann himself, dated October 7, 1942. "As her manner appeared to have become intolerable," it coldly explained, "the instruction was issued for her to be relocated as soon as possible to the Old Age Ghetto at Theresienstadt, regardless of her case pending at the Reich Genealogical Bureau (*Reichssippenam.*)" (The Baroness, born June 6, 1900, was only forty-two.)

Göring appears not to have suspected the character of Theresienstadt, as a showpiece "clearing station" through which elderly Jews passed on their final journey to "the east." On May 22, 1942, the Gestapo's chief (Heinrich Müller himself) had written him about a Jew, Hans Martin Manasse, and his wife, Rosa Cohn. Gömnert replied on June 17, "May I draw your attention to the Reichsmarschall's handwritten comments and request a brief word from you before any further steps are taken re Manasse/Cohn to enable the Reichsmarschall to pronounce finally on this case." On September 17, Gömnert brought Müller's decision to Göring, who directed his aide to notify the Gestapo official "that the Reichsmarschall requests that this couple should be deported together to Theresienstadt (*Judenstadt*)." The Reichsmarschall, Gömnert continued, had notified Himmler, and he added, "The deportation to Theresienstadt is to be carried out as soon as possible and the Jewish couple are to be enabled to stay there as long as this town is made available for this. The Reichsmarschall asks to be informed as soon as they have been deported." Göring appears to have known of Auschwitz only as the gigantic new synthetic rubber plant built there by Albert Speer. At a central-planning session on July 2, 1943, Pili Körner would mention the current plans to expand Auschwitz's output to twenty-eight thousand tons of rubber.

There is one clue that by 1942 Göring had learned of Hitler's systematic "mercy killing" of the population of Germany's mental institutions, because

Oct 1942

on May 6, he instructed Gömnert: "The Reichsmarschall desires that—adopting Obergruppenführer soldiers who are in the future shall be placed in institutions e said institution attains the chara

Besides Philipp Bouhler, who ation, it was Martin Bormann w paings. "Bormann," testified Gö in September 1945, "would mi to please [Hitler] . . . Bormann with notepaper. He used to take was never intended to be taken was fighting tooth and nail to keep one document on economic poli —through Bormann—Göring s until now have been solely in m that unless I am informed and i to be requested on any domain

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on May 6, he instructed Gömnert to write a letter in these terms to Heydrich:
"The Reichsmarschall desires that the high command be required to order
that—adopting Obergruppenführer Heydrich's own proposal—Wehrmacht
soldiers who are in the future committed to institutions for the mentally ill
shall be placed in institutions exclusively reserved for soldiers, so that the
said institution attains the character of a military hospital."

Besides Philipp Bouhler, who ran the euthanasia "mercy killing" operation,
it was Martin Bormann who forced through these less merciful cam-
paigns. "Bormann," testified Göring, squirming under American interrogation
in September 1945, "would make everything three times as bad, in order
to please [Hitler] . . . Bormann used to walk around with his pockets stuffed
with notepaper. He used to take down everything the Führer said, even if it
was never intended to be taken seriously." By March 1942 Göring would
be fighting tooth and nail to keep Bormann out of his own operations. Across
one document on economic policy that Dr. Robert Ley submitted to Hitler
—through Bormann—Göring scrawled, "This is an area where decisions
until now have been solely in my hands. I recently mentioned to the Führer
that unless I am informed and in agreement then no 'Führer decisions' are
to be requested on any domain of mine except by me in person."

But the fanatics no longer heeded Hitler either. "Reichsminister Lam-
mers," recorded the Staatssekretär to the minister of justice in the spring of
1942, "told me the Führer has repeatedly declared to him he wants to see
the solution of the Jewish problem postponed until after the war." But the
"solution" had already begun, and Göring, as Hitler's surviving successor,
would be called to account for it.

by 1942

Jan 1942

USAND- RAID

"The Reichsmarschall," Heinrich Himmler would later recall, "had the utmost difficulty in getting his fellow judges—all [army] generals—to agree to sentence this coward to death." In this instance even Hitler felt Göring had gone too far, and commuted the death sentence to fortress arrest.

Göring's merciless stance—more Catholic, it seemed, than the pope—strengthened Waldau's resolve to get out. "For three years," he wrote privately on January 3, "I have held down this job with almost total self-denial. I have labored to the best of my conscience and ability. I have gladly borne the burden that meticulous devotion to duty and permanent mental servitude have thrust upon me, but in the long run that burden, coupled with the knowledge that I bear the ultimate responsibility for events without the slightest means of influencing them, entitles me to the view that three years is enough."

Göring continued his vendetta against the army. Meeting Hitler again on the ninth, he criticized the army's feeble winter preparations. He had had to turn over three million sets of winter clothing to the army. Warning that the war was going to last into yet another winter, Göring recommended stockpiling fur hats and goggles now. "Göring told me," Hitler told his staff, impressed, "that when he goes hunting he always takes heat packs with him like the ones we've been finding on Soviet soldiers."

As the war's problems became more intractable, Göring took refuge in trivia and minor postwar problems. British code-breakers intercepted his instruction, passed to troops on the Russian front, that all air-force personnel summoned to his or the Führer's presence "must be free of lice." His leather-bound diary shows him at Carinhall on January 23, 1942, discussing with Nazi labor leader Robert Ley plans for postwar pensions that would embrace even the lowest income groups, and a "suggestion for a luncheon where party veterans can meet and talk to me." Another diary note, "Assistance for evacuees," reflects, however, the one nightmare that would not go away with the dawn: the RAF's bombing offensive. Nor did it escape his attention that when he now left East Prussia for Berlin, one after another, sixteen locomotives pulling his train broke down in the cold. For his next conference with Hitler he dictated this reminder: "Responsibility for provision of sufficient locomotives in good time for winter 1942-43, capable of trouble-free operation at temperatures below -40°C."

Hitler sent him down to see Benito Mussolini and reassure him about Germany's will to fight on. After taking explicit instructions from Hitler on what to say in Rome, Göring departed aboard *Asia* taking valet, nurse, doctor, and a multitude of staff officers, including his nephew Lieutenant Göring, Görmnert, and Bodenschatz with him. The hapless Hoffmann von Waldau, scandalized by this new extravagance, cynically recorded that Göring made "considerable preparations, mainly of a sartorial nature" for the jaunt. He added, "How I hate to go swanning off at times like these!" Waldau's tender

s 1942 began Hitler's armies in Russia were in crisis. From the Crimea and Kharkov northward starving, ill-equipped, and frozen a furious onslaught. Hitler changed he had only praise for the Luftwaffe von Richthofen.

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enant General Hans von Sponeck, peninsula of Kerch in the Crimea. to punish Sponeck, which aroused t at Rominten the next day. "You served Luftwaffe operations chief ten make somebody else carry the reed, and convened a court-martial hings all his own way, even then.

gaze was spared the more scandalous displays of opulence. Becoming restless once during the journey Göring sent for the pot of diamonds, tipped them out and counted them, then paraded them across the table, mixed them up, and calmed down completely.

In Rome the Reichsmarschall made no attempt to consult with Italy's foreign minister, Ciano (who learned of this diamonds-fetish episode)—"In fact," wrote Ciano in his diary, "ever since we bestowed that [diamond] Collar on von Ribbentrop, [Göring] has adopted an aloof air toward me." "We are having a hard time," Göring had whispered to Mussolini at the station, alluding to the army's difficulties in Russia. Meeting again more formally, he blamed this crisis on the sub-Napoleonic temperatures. "Such difficulties will not recur," he promised. "Whatever happens in the coming year, the Führer will halt and take up winter quarters in good time."

As for North Africa, the main problem was that of supplies. Göring loftily suggested that Italian submarines transport forty thousand tons of supplies a month to Rommel. The "bloated and overbearing" Reichsmarschall got on Ciano's nerves. Dining at the Excelsior on February 4, Göring talked to Ciano only of his rings and jewelry. Accompanying him to the station, Ciano—who appears to have known about such things—reflected that Göring's full-length sable coat was what a high-grade call girl might wear to the opera.

A serious challenge to the Reichsmarschall's authority confronted him soon after his return to East Prussia. On Sunday morning, February 9, the munitions minister, Fritz Todt, perished in a plane crash at the Wolf's Lair. With barely a flicker of grief, Göring hastened over to demand Todt's ministry for himself, only to learn that Hitler had already selected his thirty-six-year-old chief architect, Albert Speer, for the job. In terms of blind ambition and pathological zest for intrigue, Göring had now met his match. When Milch brought Speer to him, Göring blandly emphasized that his new job was merely the production of army munitions. Milch, he continued, would make a better munitions minister and would shortly call a big conference of arms industrialists at the Air Ministry. "The Ministry of Munitions," he reminded Speer some weeks later, "was set up at my own suggestion purely to offset the shortcomings of the Army Weapons Office." Todt had agreed not to trespass on the Reichsmarschall's Four-Year Plan, and now Göring invited Speer to sign a similar agreement. Realizing immediately what Göring was up to, Speer raced back to the Wolf's Lair and persuaded Hitler to endorse him personally as the new minister. Hitler complied in a two-hour speech delivered to the arms industrialists in the Reich Cabinet room—Göring was informed that his own presence was not necessary.

For years afterward, Göring seethed over his humiliation at Speer's hands. No slouch in the art of power politics, Speer initially flattered and fawned upon Göring, inviting Göring to appoint him as "general plenipotentiary for arms production in the Four-Year Plan" (to enable him to draw upon Göring's

Febr. 1942

still considerable residual author stiff-necked, bureaucratic General small body of men gathered around planning policy." Sitting on this I would allocate all raw materials: Year Plan. That agency now became Planning only by the witless Pili manpower allocation, through La Göring freely interfered. When workers, drew attention to the unt Göring objected: Some women, h were not. It was like plough horse. Himmler was informed, "also s culture should not be exposed to womenfolk." Oblivious of Germ would allow his own private office in September 1942.

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still considerable residual authority). He also won Keitel's arms chief, the stiff-necked, bureaucratic General Georg Thomas, to the idea of creating “a small body of men gathered around the Reichsmarschall to direct central planning policy.” Sitting on this new central-planning body, Speer and Milch would allocate all raw materials. It effectively spelled the end of the Four-Year Plan. That agency now became a hollow shell, represented in Central Planning only by the witless Pili Körner. The Plan retained control only over manpower allocation, through Labor Commissioner Fritz Sauckel, and here Göring freely interfered. When Sauckel, searching for two million more workers, drew attention to the untapped reserves of female labor in the Reich, Göring objected: Some women, he averred, were born to work, while others were not. It was like plough horse and racehorse. “Reichsmarschall Göring,” Himmler was informed, “also says that ladies who are the bearers of our culture should not be exposed to the silly talk and insolence of the simpler womenfolk.” Oblivious of Germany's crucial manpower shortages, Göring would allow his own private office and personal staff to grow to 104 people in September 1942.

Again visiting Paris during March 1942, Göring bought half a dozen paintings, a terra-cotta figurine of Madame du Barry as Diana, and a vase. He toured the Left Bank dealers. Hofer totted up the purchases and handed the list to Fräulein Limberger aboard Göring's train on March 15.

During his absence abroad, Milch had drawn up tables showing that Germany was now producing 850 airplanes per month, of which only 314 were fighters. The air staff's current requirement was 360 fighters—itsself a ludicrously low figure. “Herr Reichsmarschall,” Milch said, tackling Göring at Rominten on March 21, “if you were to say *thirty-six hundred* fighters, then I should be bound to state that against America and Britain combined that figure is still too few!”

“I shouldn't know what to do with more than three hundred sixty,” retorted General Jeschonnek, baffled.

Milch suggested they double the figure to 720. Göring paused, agonizing as ever whenever a firm decision was called for. Outside, the temperature was 26 degrees below freezing. In mid-discussion, so the minutes record, “the Reichsmarschall went for a sleigh ride at 5:25 P.M. Conference resumed at 6:55 P.M. . . .” He told Milch to go ahead. Two years later Milch would be manufacturing three thousand fighter planes a month.

As though on the devil's cue, a few days later the British fire-bombing of Europe's ancient cities began in mortal earnest. RAF Bomber Command now had orders to attack the population centers rather than the Nazi factories. Earlier in March 1942 they had bombed Paris, killing eight hundred Frenchmen. Hitler's first instinct had been to demand reprisals against London—“That's what counts,” he raged at Göring. “The maximum shock and terror—not the economic damage inflicted.” By March 21, however, he had

changed his mind, and when Göring inquired after the reason, Jeschonnek could only explain, "The Führer doesn't want to provoke attack on Germany's cities so long as the British keep to their present small scale and we aren't able to deliver annihilating blows in the west."

The German hesitation went unrewarded. One night a week later, 230 British bombers burned the heart out of medieval Lübeck, killing three hundred people. On the morning of that raid, March 28, Göring had again met his sleazy art "curator" Walter Hofer at Carinhall. The day's typed agenda was crowded with items remote from the terrors of mass fire raids—the acquisition of paintings of Stefan Lochner, Italian art treasures from Count Contini, Alois Miedl, and his three Cézanne watercolors and a Cézanne landscape, and notes about "two little figurines from Brussels," and "[Emil] Renders still has some sculptures." The day's agenda also mentions the Dutch Jew Nathan Katz (whom Göring was smuggling across to Switzerland with his wife and children in return for valuable paintings deposited with the Swiss consul at The Hague) and Katz's paintings by Van Gogh and Van Dyck.

While the cities of Hitler's new empire began to burn, the Reichsmarschall indulged his caprices. He regarded himself as above and beyond the law. When Milch celebrated his fiftieth birthday at the end of March 1942, Göring gave him a valuable tapestry and ordered the media to give prominence to "photographs portraying the Reichsmarschall and Field Marshal Milch." Milch was tactless enough to ask, "Where was the tapestry snatched?" Adopting the double standard that comes so easily to those in power, Göring was ruthless in campaigning against corruption among others. He forbade Professor Messerschmitt to set aside scarce aluminum for postwar ventures; he prohibited Daimler-Benz from manufacturing twelve-cylinder limousines for other Nazi leaders. But Gömnert's files bear witness to the substantial orders that Göring placed for personal radio sets, refrigerators, and deep freezers—all virtually unobtainable in wartime Germany—for his family and benefactors. SS Gruppenführer Otto Ohlendorf learned of the priceless trinkets showered on Göring by Felix Schüller, head of the Reich Association (*Reichsgruppe*) of Handicrafts; when the Ministry of Economics opened an investigation, Göring's office impounded its dossier.

"Göring," Hitler chided him that March, worried about the top soldier's image, "do you think it looks good to be photographed with a pipe? What would you say to a statue with a cigar in your mouth?" More caustic comments were sometimes heard from the public at large. The Gestapo reported that cinema audiences also grumbled about Göring's chunky cigars at a time when by contrast, they themselves were fobbed off with noxious tobacco substitutes like lime-blossom leaves. The newsreel audiences remarked too upon his uniforms—always spotless white at a time when they could not buy soap powder—and criticized his obesity at a time when "the Russians were having to eat grass." On April 2, one SS Gruppenführer complained

March 1942

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to Himmler that Emmy Göring had "and the table fairly groaned un

He was able to entertain so la market operation allegedly desig victims. Through the Four-Year l and Kurt Kadgien he had already and jewels. Now he set up an Ex bulk-buy artifacts, wine, and foo throughout the occupied west. Hi J. Veltjens, a Richthofen Squad neering spirit.

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to Himmler that Emmy Göring had invited eighty generals' wives to coffee,
"and the table fairly groaned under the weight of delicacies."

He was able to entertain so lavishly in part because of a colossal black-
market operation allegedly designed to procure consumer goods for blitz
victims. Through the Four-Year Plan's senior economists Friedrich Gramsch
and Kurt Kadgien he had already plundered the west's gold, foreign currency,
and jewels. Now he set up an External Agency West (*Aussenstelle West*) to
bulk-buy artifacts, wine, and foodstuffs—for his own use and disposition—
throughout the occupied west. His senior purchasing agent here was Colonel
J. Veltjens, a Richthofen Squadron veteran possessed of the right bucca-
neering spirit.

It is plain that Göring had a large stake in several business enterprises.
He had a pecuniary interest in the near-worthless "vitamin pills" dispensed
by the billion to the German armed forces by Hitler's doctor Theo Morell,
because when the Luftwaffe's chief surgeon, Professor Erich Hippke, pro-
tested that the pills were useless, Morell complained in a letter to Göring
dated July 31, and the Reichsmarschall sacked the professor without a hear-
ing. Questioned whether he had a stake in Otto Horcher's famous, leather-
walled gourmet restaurant in Berlin, he would deny it ("I am not that
versatile!"), but the archives show that he had ordered Horcher's key staff
to be exempted from the military draft, had tripled the gas allocation to
Horcher vehicles, and had exempted the restaurant from Goebbels's "total
war" decrees. Learning that Otto Horcher knew how to lay hands on seventy
thousand bottles of port wine for the air force, Göring sanctioned the deal
"provided that a small quantity is diverted for his personal use" and "ten
thousand bottles are set aside for Horcher's."

After the fire raid on Lübeck Hitler reversed his decision about retaliation,
and ordered Göring to carry out "terror attacks" on British cities other than
London—like the ancient and beautiful towns of Bath and Exeter—until the
British lost what he called their "appetite for terror." Göring complied. The
British responded by setting fire to Rostock on the Baltic. Unhappy at this
rising tide of barbarism, on April 19 the Reichsmarschall nonetheless lectured
his Luftflotte commanders at Rominten about the need to show no quarter
to the Soviets: "The Russian," he said, "is an enemy of barbarous methods.
They ought not to be initiated by us, but we've got to show a sterner face."
As the war slithered down its toboggan route of terror and counter-terror,
Göring for the most part took refuge from taking responsibility for atrocities
in the excuse of "superior orders."

In Paris it was spring. On May 14, the Reichsmarschall once more climbed
aboard *Asia* with assorted Görings and Sonnemanns and headed back to
France. But each visit now left him angrier than the last. "The people there

are eating off the fat of the land," he would grumble, speaking to gauleiters three months later. "It's a disgrace. I've seen villages where armies of them parade around with their long baguette loaves under their arms . . . and with baskets of oranges and fresh dates from North Africa." Dining at Maxim's in Paris the Reichsmarschall found himself surrounded by bloated French tricksters and wealthy black marketeers. "They're richer than ever," he fumed in the same speech, "because they charge us lunatic prices."

Train journeys like these brought home to him the gradual collapse of the wartime railroad system. French express trains still ran daily between Brussels and Paris, but the German railroads did not unload freight on Sundays or at night; fully laden trains choked the eastbound lines as Hitler's armies wound up for his spring offensive into Russia, and there were 165,000 empty freight cars waiting to return. The immense distances now covered effectively halved the available rolling stock. The result was a gradual breakdown of the railroad system that was starving the arms industry of coal and steel.

Reluctant to harm Reich Transport Minister Julius Dörpmüller—a personal friend and benefactor—Göring persuaded Hitler that the minister's sixty-five-year-old Staatssekretär, Wilhelm Kleinmann, was to blame for the railway chaos. Acting on Göring's advice, on May 24 Hitler told Speer and Milch to take charge of the transport system. Addressing these two men, he significantly reaffirmed his own esteem for Göring—"That's why I have appointed my best man," said Hitler, "who is somewhat younger than myself, as my successor."

Göring needed this kind of reassurance. He suspected that the Führer had begun to go behind his back. Hitler had spent several hours eating alone with Göring's subordinate, General von Richthofen, on May 21, discussing the Crimean campaign. He had even scoffed at the hunting fraternity. "I wonder why," mocked Hitler, "our soldiers don't hang up the jawbones of dead Russians in their rooms!" A few days later Richthofen dictated this smug note into his diary: "Göring has bawled out Jeschonnek [chief of air staff] because I was with the Führer!"

Far worse was to come for Göring. Late on May 30, 1942, as he was entertaining Speer and Milch, the new "transport overlords," at Veldenstein Castle, the phone rang. It was the Nazi gauleiter of Cologne, Josef Grohé. A violent British air raid had begun, he screamed. After a further exchange during which Göring claimed that it could only be a small-scale attack the guests heard him bellow, "Are you calling me a liar?" and slam the phone down. The phone rang again, and Göring snatched it. This time he fell silent—and it was obvious who was calling now. Hitler, telephoning from his special train in East Prussia, told him the gauleiter was talking of "hundreds" of British bombers attacking. There had never been a British raid in such numbers before. But Göring assured him that the gauleiter's figures were wrong—seventy planes, at most, had attacked. As daybreak came, he learned that his defenses had shot down forty bombers. It looked like a big victory,

May 1942

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even though five hundred pe brought the sensational news don that over one thousand bleated that this was just a refused to be deceived. "It that only seventy or eighty to an unpleasant truth. I mus sions."

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THE THOUSAND-BOMBER RAID 357

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This first thousand-bomber raid marked a perceptible watershed in their relations. "The British have learned it all from us," the Reichsmarschall lamented months later. "That's the most depressing thing about it. Except for their electronic warfare they have learned it all from us—the how and the why of delivering concentrated air raids. They have cribbed the lot. They were botching things up so beautifully to start with!"

THE ROAD TO STALINGRAD

Where are the wells?

"Hitler had told me," Göring reminisced later, "that he proposed to consider the Russian war at an

end when his armies were established on the Volga. Thereafter he would contain the Russians by occasional punitive expeditions while turning the bulk of his forces against the west."

Early that summer of 1942 the Germans seemed on the point of realizing these aims, as Göring's pilots pounded the far-flung enemies of the Reich from Leningrad and Voronezh to Tobruk, as they bombed towns in southern England and freighters of Allied convoys in the Arctic bound for North Russia.

Göring's stock soared with the successes of the Luftwaffe, and he often ate with Hitler at the Wolf's Lair. A lunch guest that July 4 found the calmness that the Reichsmarschall radiated "impressive," and remarked upon his "good-naturedness" and his "air of honest, unconditional loyalty." When their table conversation turned to procuring vegetable oils from North Africa, Göring affably launched into a discourse on how he was stockpiling food by worldwide black-market operations—"often without letting his right hand know what his left hand was up to."

This allusion to oil procurement was a first hint of problems to come. The

shortage of refined aviation spirit and operations. Russian petroleum lion tons, would provide the only cording to the figures shown to G6 Mountains—had reserves of 613 million, and Groznyy with 120 million. Russians had comprehensively lacked the expertise and drilling need at least 120 rigs, and Göring steel to make them.

On July 10, he called in the oil back into production once this field "how we are going to tackle the circumstances they will have had the wells are kept pumping until

The experts dispelled his optimism been prepared, demolitions are f

At Kherson in the Ukraine the C and dismantled in France. This thousand tons a year, but it won't have to take so long?" asked G

"The Russians have wrecked have to rebuild from scratch."

"Getting oil wells working in ceptionally tough."

"That's not the point," rasped to be done."

As the armies hammered their way Göring reviewed his art collection. Menten offered him Adriaen Y. paid him thirty thousand Swiss francs ran less smoothly. After buying life of the emperor Charlemagne Charpentier in Paris, Göring recently purchased them for one million francs. The marshal of Paris Gestapo, but recovered on

The most lurid example of his he learned of two magnificent F. Bort, near Limoges. Owned joint wife, each was thirty feet long; hundred years before but with sees those," Lieutenant Göring

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** he loves to talk too much!*

July 1942

shortage of refined aviation spirit was already setting back Luftwaffe training and operations. Russian petroleum reserves, estimated at two thousand million tons, would provide the only long-term solution to Hitler's needs. According to the figures shown to Göring, the Baku Field—beyond the Caucasus Mountains—had reserves of 613 million tons, followed by Maykop with 137 million, and Groznyy with 120 million. But there was a snag: The retreating Russians had comprehensively sabotaged the wells, and the German invaders lacked the expertise and drilling equipment to restore production. They would need at least 120 rigs, and Göring now found that he had not set aside enough steel to make them.

On July 10, he called in the oil experts to discuss how to bring Maykop back into production once this field was captured. "Are we clear," he asked, "how we are going to tackle the demolitions? My own hope is that in the circumstances they will have had no time to carry out demolitions, because the wells are kept pumping until the last minute."

The experts dispelled his optimism. "I think," said one, "that once they've been prepared, demolitions are feasible in a very few hours."

At Kherson in the Ukraine the Germans were reassembling a refinery seized and dismantled in France. This would be able to produce four hundred thousand tons a year, but it would take until May 1943 to erect. "Does it have to take so long?" asked Göring.

"The Russians have wrecked everything," was the explanation. "So we have to rebuild from scratch."

"Getting oil wells working in winter," one expert lectured him, "is exceptionally tough."

"That's not the point," rasped Göring. "Even if it's tough, it's still got to be done."

As the armies hammered their way southward and southeastward into Russia, Göring reviewed his art collections yet again. The Dutch art dealer Hubert Menten offered him Adriaen Ysenbrant's "Madonna and Child"; Göring paid him thirty thousand Swiss francs for it. Deals in less valuable currencies ran less smoothly. After buying a series of Flemish tapestries depicting the life of the emperor Charlemagne for 4 million French francs from the Galerie Charpentier in Paris, Göring learned that the delighted vendors had only recently purchased them for one tenth of that price. The furious Reichsmarschall resorted to the usual offices of Dr. Helmuth Knochen, chief of the Paris Gestapo, but recovered only eight hundred thousand francs.

The most lurid example of his Byzantine purchasing methods came when he learned of two magnificent Flemish hunting tapestries in the Château de Bort, near Limoges. Owned jointly by the Marquis de Sèze and his estranged wife, each was thirty feet long and over fifteen feet high, woven over four hundred years before but with colors as fresh as yesterday. "If my uncle sees those," Lieutenant Göring had gasped, "they'll be packed up and taken

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July, Aug 1942

Göring sent two French art agents, to photograph them, ostensibly for an art sale to the estranged Madame de Sèze but she said the tapestries were not for sale and had to tread very carefully. Her agents persuaded her, provided Marshal Pétain's signature, however, fought the administration des Beaux-Arts to list the tapestries. The agents appeared at the château and triumphantly that she had given the tapestries to his General Hanesse to threaten her with retaliation, but Beaux-Arts now refused for "restoration," and the Laval government formally accepted the "gift" by the Reich's adjutant Major Drees recorded the tapestries in francs around in bribes to French officials in a million-franc offer. "In the absence of a revealing message, "I shall inform the French government, to avoid German embassy here." Using top-secret, Göring instructed him to tell Pétain's staff affair and regarded the whole as a matter of servants: "Surely the Government will not refuse the sale. I am just asking for my money would be impossible: The state has no money."

Göring seized the tapestries, and in August 1940 the Luftwaffe Corps commander General von Richthofen, accompanied by an unidentified pilot, "I've just flown in with the Junkers Ju 88. And at last we've got those damned

He indulged his muses. In 1940 the first British Mosquito bomber. Its speed, both fast and virtually invisible in the night. In 1940 he too had ordered the production of "such garbage." Göring, however, that he, Göring, could not transfer jaunts to Paris, Amsterdam, the ministry. "According to both getting from Britain," he jeered to get more bombers and more fighters

than we are!" (The conference minutes add that he himself considered this "out of the question.") The truth was there, written in the skies, but he averted his gaze to more pleasurable horizons. His air force was overextended on every front, but he would not believe it. At the end of July the high command's General Walter Warlimont would return from North Africa with a bleak picture of Rommel's troops fighting against crushing enemy air superiority. "Do you hear that, Göring?" said Hitler, with an unpleasant edge to his voice. "Saturation bombing in the desert now!"

Hitler shifted his headquarters to Vinnitsa in the Ukraine in mid-July 1942. Göring settled at Kalinovka, about half an hour's drive away. The countryside was devastated and idle, there were airplane wrecks on the local airfield, and the surrounding peasantry were desperately poor. Göring made only one sortie into the conquered Ukrainian countryside, venturing forth into a local town. He sent a servant off with two cigar boxes to trade with the peasants, and a woman gave him a dozen fresh eggs for each of them. "The boxes were quite empty," laughed Göring delightedly later, "but they were pretty to look at. The woman was enthralled, she'd never had anything so beautiful in her life."

It was not only Hitler's temper that Göring now had to allay. Public anger in the Reich was aroused by the continual air raids and food shortages. On August 5, the gauleiters stated their complaints to him in the lavishly furnished "Hermann Göring Room" of the Air Ministry. The next day Göring counterattacked, blaming the food shortages on the slackness of the gauleiters of the newly occupied territories. "Our troops," he complained, "have already occupied the incomparably fertile lands between the Don and the Caucasus . . . and yet the German people are still going hungry." In Western Europe the rich crops were being harvested, yet nothing had been delivered by Holland, Belgium, or France to Germany. "Gentlemen," he complained to the gauleiters, "these people all hate our guts and you won't win one of them over with your namby-pamby methods. They're charming to us right now because they've got no choice. But if the British once get in there, just watch the French show their true face! The same Frenchman who keeps inviting you to lunch now will very rapidly show you that the Frenchman is a German-hater." "I'm fed up to here," he said a few moments later, slicing his hand across his thick neck. "We win victory after victory. Where's the profit from these victories?"

He suggested one typically cynical way of procuring consumer-goods from the occupied territories. "We must first buy up all that pink junk and those frightful alabaster things and trashy jewelry in Venice—there's not a country on earth that can match Italy for kitsch. . . . The [Ukrainian] peasants won't part with anything for money, but they do barter. . . . For face powder you can get butter or anything you want. So let's buy up kitsch. Let's open kitsch factories!"

What was happening behind the eastern front now was no joking matter.

The summer offensive was no longer making such rapid progress, and the high Caucasus Mountains were looming ahead of Field Marshal Wilhelm List's army group. Months earlier, Göring had asked secretly for data on the Caucasus. His staff had supplied eight library books including Karl Egger's *Conquest of the Caucasus*, the journal of the Austrian Alpine Association, and a pocket guide to the U.S.S.R. He had read the books by June 25 and returned them, satisfied that he was now an expert on the Caucasus. When the army's chief of staff, Franz Halder, now reminded Hitler of this mountain barrier, Göring swept his bejeweled, sausagelike fingers across the map and declared, "The Caucasus? It's no different really from Berlin's Grünewald."

Out of the forests and marshes behind the advancing German armies there now rose hordes of Soviet partisans. Göring suggested releasing convicted poachers and smugglers into special units of desperadoes to combat partisans with their own irregular methods—they could "burn and ravish," as he put it, in their assigned operational zones. To this suggestion he then added the idea of conscripting Dutchmen willy-nilly into two antipartisan regiments. When a police general at his conference on August 6 remarked that previous attempts at recruiting the Dutch had failed, Göring rounded on him angrily. "Then shanghai them! Dump them in the partisan territories, and don't give them any guns until they get there! 'Root, hog—or die!' " Gauleiter Lohse stated that the partisans were appearing in military formations equipped with better weapons than the police units.

GÖRING: You'd make a great fiction writer, Mr. Lohse—

LOHSE: They're reports from the police and Wehrmacht!

GÖRING:—If they're from our Wehrmacht then I'd say, *best-selling* fiction. . . . If ten partisans turn up with muskets, then the Wehrmacht afterward talks about whole divisions of them!

In the far south General von Richthofen decided that Stalin's armies were beaten, and dictated this observation into his diary. Beppo Schmid, Göring's Chief Intelligence officer, assessed the Soviet air strength at less than one thousand planes. But Theo Rowehl's reconnaissance squadron brought back photographs of thousands of planes concealed on airfields up to six hundred miles behind the enemy lines. Schmid decided that the planes were dummies; he decided too that on balance it would be prudent to withhold the more awkward photographs from the air staff. Jeschonnek was worried enough about the future. Schmid overheard him telling his staff, "If we haven't won by December, then there's no chance."

As General von Hoth's Fourth Panzer Army slowed to a virtual standstill outside Stalingrad that August, Göring's criticisms of the army generals became more trenchant. Armed by Richthofen with specific details, he accused the generals of cowardice and of exaggerating the Soviet strength. On August 27, Richthofen's operations officer, Colonel Karl-Heinz Schulz,

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came to report on the defections of the commander, Friedrich Pau, and these complaints on to Hitler's forces," he insisted—"Reich's force had its work cut out on the terrain."

Hitler was in no mood to listen to the allegations. The sweltering, oppressive heat, to the ill temper. Oppressed soon start to devastate Muni. Göring to start building flak staff of Hitler's gloomy prospect of his own: "We'll probably lose the south of the Caucasus." But distant than ever; Field Marshal maps showing that he could not pass narrow mountain passes. Fein, a tantrum, refused to shake hands with another. Göring fled from the Caucasus engulfed him too. Milch, who over List, Göring already had more books on the Caucasus.

But the real fulcrum of the Caucasus. The city was a grimy, the Volga River. Each side of the campaign. On September 10, the siege of Stalingrad gets slower and the airfield only ten miles from the demand that one single army not mean Paulus, whom he had not.

The Americans had now begun to send B-17 Flying Fortress squadrons armored and equipped with explosives to settle on Göring's fighter command.

Göring concealed the bad news. "He brags," he thundered to a Beppo Schmid to have thousand-bomber jaunts. He won't be making any threat equally cheerily. "In the end, it is spelled in capital letters: Blitz."

But one of the formidable B-17s out of formation—and when a week after the speech, he brought the warning against underestimating

Sept 1942

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came to report on the defeatism and feeble leadership of the Sixth Army's
commander, Friedrich Paulus, and his corps commanders. Göring passed
these complaints on to Hitler. There could be no talk of "strong enemy
forces," he insisted—"Reconnoitering northward," he continued, "my air
force had its work cut out to find any enemy troops at all, in wide-open
terrain."

Hitler was in no mood to listen to the army's defense against Göring's
allegations. The sweltering, mosquito-laden climate of Vinnitsa contributed
to the ill temper. Oppressed by fear that the British bomber squadrons would
soon start to devastate Munich, Vienna, Linz, and Nuremberg, he instructed
Göring to start building flak towers in those cities at once. Göring told his
staff of Hitler's gloomy prognosis on September 13 and added a prediction
of his own: "We'll probably get these [raids] once our troops are standing
south of the Caucasus." But that triumphant moment suddenly seemed more
distant than ever; Field Marshal List arrived at Hitler's headquarters with
maps showing that he could make no further progress through the tortuous,
narrow mountain passes. Feeling cheated and betrayed, Hitler flew into a
tantrum, refused to shake hands with one general and erupted like a volcano
over another. Göring fled from the headquarters before the glowing lava
engulfed him too. Milch, who arrived at midday, noted afterward: "Row
over List, Göring already left." The Reichsmarschall sent off for twenty
more books on the Caucasus.

But the real fulcrum of the fighting now became Stalingrad, not the Cau-
casus. The city was a grimy, sprawling sea of houses and factories straddling
the Volga River. Each side realized that Stalingrad was the key to the Russian
campaign. On September 10, Richthofen wrote, exasperated, "The throttling
of Stalingrad gets slower and slower." From his base headquarters at a fighter
airfield only ten miles from the city he phoned Göring on the thirteenth to
demand that one single army commander take over that sector—and he did
not mean Paulus, whom he regarded as "worthy but uninspiring."

The Americans had now begun raiding German targets with their famous
B-17 Flying Fortress squadrons. The bomber flew fast and high. It was heavily
armored and equipped with eleven heavy machine guns. A gloomy overcast
settled on Göring's fighter commanders.

Göring concealed the bad news from the German public. "If Mr. Churchill
brags," he thundered to a Berlin audience on October 4, "that he is going
to have thousand-bomber jaunts over Germany every night, let me just reply
this: He won't be making any at all." He dismissed the American bomber
threat equally cheerily. "In the American language," he scoffed, "one word
is spelled in capital letters: Bluff!"

But one of the formidable B-17's had now been shot down—it had drifted
out of formation—and when Milch came out to see Göring at Kalinovka a
week after the speech, he brought the dossier on it. The field marshal solemnly
warned against underestimating this plane.

"How come they tell me one thing," Göring challenged, uneasily alluding to the air staff, "and you another? Whom do I believe?"

His experts had now spotted what looked like turbochargers on photographs of an American B-24 Liberator bomber. That meant that they might soon be flying into German airspace at thirty thousand feet. Göring shrugged it off. "The Reichsmarschall," Milch reported to his staff in Berlin a few days later, "told me that there is no cause for anxiety about the American planes and that four-engined though they be, we can contemplate the future with equanimity. I told him that I do not agree—I think the Flying Fortress and B-24 are remarkable planes."

Facing allegations of the hoarding of labor in his bloated Luftwaffe, in September 1942 Göring was ordered by Hitler to release two hundred thousand of his troops to the depleted army. It was a bitter blow. He offered to set up twenty Luftwaffe "field divisions" instead, and Hitler relented.

It was a controversial decision, even in the air force. General von Richthofen feared (rightly, as it turned out) that the Luftwaffe divisions would prove "a colossal blunder," and noted this belief in his diary after flying over to see the Reichsmarschall on October 15 bringing photographs of the ravages of Stalingrad:

[Göring] curses List, Kleist, and Ruoff [the army's commanders in the Caucasus] dreadfully. I stoutly defend the latter two, but there's no reasoning with the Reichsmarschall. Drags me off with Jeschonnek to make an unannounced call on the Führer and lets fly there [against the army generals].

Helmuth Greiner, the high command chronicler, wrote in his own private diary that day, "The witch hunt by the air-force brass against the army goes on. Ghastly ass-licking." Back aboard the train *Asia* Richthofen tried to curry favor with Göring over dinner. "I praise his really very good [Berlin] speech. He swallows the flattery hook, line, and sinker. Hints at an early field marshal's baton for me. . . . I protest at having to lug a baton around."

As the exhausted German infantry slogged into Stalingrad and the rumors of a huge Red Army counteroffensive multiplied, Göring left for a week in Rome. The German diplomats there did not relish his coming, and the chortling German ambassador phoned the Palazzo Venezia on October 19 that Göring had been suddenly stricken with dysentery, and was "unable to leave his throne even for ten minutes." When Göring finally limped in to the palace four days later, Mussolini harped on Rommel's oil crisis and the troublesome British base on Malta. Four days after their meeting, the British launched their triumphant offensive against Rommel at Alamein. On November 2, British code-breakers heard Göring's headquarters frantically diverting bomber squadrons from Norway to the Mediterranean. Richthofen's Luftflotte 4—

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already pushed to its limits by night fighters to Greece.

Disobeying Hitler's orders armies back to a line that he b another army debacle, ordere Kesselring, who was the high c to Rome late on November 5

GÖRING: What is the situ

KESSELRING: It is such the we have proposed. Dow contradicted the orders o is the one at Fuka.

GÖRING: Is it well organ KESSELRING: No, but it feel that if it is manned i least temporarily a viable

Worse was to follow. The Ge proaching through the Straits evening to order heroic sacrific

GÖRING: According to ou our air-force range in fe ready by then.

KESSELRING: Herr Reich attempt a landing in Afri

GÖRING: I am convinced Sardinia, or at Derna or

KESSELRING: More likely

GÖRING: Yes but not Fr could be given a severe t

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Tomorrow you are to

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*Italian intelligence wiretapped this s

Arsch lecken

the supreme sacrifice. The convoy is to be attacked without pause, day and night, wave after wave.

When the airmen load their bombs, tell them their job is to attack the aircraft carriers so that the planes can't land or take off. Next, hit the troop transports: matériel without men is worthless.

No other operations are to take place beside those against this convoy. It is the most important convoy. It is Number One. You are to direct the operations against it in person.

KESSELRING: Yes, sir.

GÖRING: I wish you all the best and am with you constantly in my thoughts.

British code-breakers heard Kesselring issue the order precisely as Göring had specified, but nothing could halt the great Allied invasion (Operation *Torch*). (On November 8, the British and American forces landed in French North Africa (precisely where Göring had not expected them). Reacting swiftly, Hitler ordered a new bridgehead established in Tunis. Meeting their Italian allies in Munich the next day, Göring silently accompanied Hitler to the Führer Building, then told Count Ciano candidly that this invasion of North Africa was the first real point the Allies had scored in this war.

With the final collapse of List's Caucasus offensive the Stalingrad catastrophe began. Hitler was faced with doleful decisions. On October 29, British code-breakers had already heard Göring instructing Richthofen's Luftflotte 4 to destroy the coveted oil installations at Grozny. A week later he ordered Baku bombed as well.

As the focus of military events shifted back to Stalingrad, the Nazi leaders were widely dispersed. Hitler was in Bavaria, the air-force and army staffs were in East Prussia, and Göring in Berlin. The Reichsmarschall was fulfilling mundane duties there—appointing professors in his capacity as prime minister of Prussia, recruiting experts to the new Reich Research Council, supervising guided-missile developments, and selecting Nazi "commissioners" (*Beauftragte*) for high-frequency physics and nuclear-physics research. And he refused to accept that the Four-Year Plan was dead. "For the sake of historical truth," he admonished Albert Speer in a letter on November 5, "I should like to make it absolutely plain that I have not relaxed my grip on the essentials of the Four-Year Plan for one instant. A glance at the dates of the conferences and sessions, at their minutes, at the decrees, laws, and ordinances that I have issued throughout this war, should satisfy you immediately that I continue to shape the crucial affairs of the Four-Year Plan despite my preoccupation with the air force."

He was still in Berlin two weeks later as the Red Army counteroffensive at Stalingrad began, across the River Don. On the next day, November 20, the Russians established a second breach in the German lines. Göring, tel-

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THE RO

ephoned about these developments. Nothing shows that he real was beginning, and about to twenty German divisions, to Division. He remained at C that the young chief of air s in Berchtesgaden bringing a fateful offer to Hitler: Jescl airlift enough supplies into even if the Sixth Army was

At 3:25 P.M. on November 19, 1942, General Paulus, or commander, General Paulus, or temporary encirclement." P possible; an airlift would fo get Göring on the line, then the Reichsmarschall agreed. The Stalingrad airlift—or with Göring's name. Yet for him three months later, Hitler the airlift to Paulus "withou

At the time of Hitler's phone call, he was presiding over an oil conference at the Maykop oil field that surrounded the wells and dropped unremittingly each borehole. Göring was in the vast oil reserves. "I'm since we captured the first oil field. The steel mushrooms baffled the experts. The steel mushrooms baffled thing like a gigantic corkscrew. The experts shook their heads. left behind faked "oil-field command, who had been running the entire economic setup line troops. I didn't just have at my service." ("Wirtschaft is scandalous of this Mr. Thoma to Georg Thomas of the high had signed this. . . . Now I ar me make myself clear. If the otherwise, we shall have to resort. His experts hastened to so one, "we'll manage somehow

Nov 1942

and we have to send oil down
the lot of you. Because let me say

Bomburg in charge of the Petroleum
That's what this general is there
to tell the army commanders, Do

hundred miles away from Maykop,"

from Maykop."

ably farther from the oil fields than
failed to find oil soon: He would

conversations logged in a register,
all.

uld have answered several outstand-
grad crisis. By now Richthofen was
that the Luftwaffe lacked the lift to
ing in Berlin, he signaled to General
Prussia, he warned the army group
the Don front. Ex-Lufthansa chief
idently among those who assured
As the Reichsmarschall's white-
anner off silver salvers in *Asia* that
ter staff and ordered every available
including his own courier flight.
avaria.

ithful Paladin," at midnight Hitler
ordering him to stand fast.

commander replied: His army, he
ians; his food and ammunition were
s.

he same time as this signal, late on
ling its now-familiar rolling stock,
Reichsmarschall's personal armored
Mercedes, a 3.4-liter Mercedes, a
d assorted baggage trucks and mo-
e that included valet Robert, nurse
inrich Zahler, Göring was impatient
several long-standing appointments
want to miss.

Obersalzberg, he barely discussed
oped there. "Hitler," he explained

guiltily to Pili Körner a few days later, "already had [Jeschonnek's airlift]
plan before I set eyes on it. I could only say, Mein Führer, you have the
figures. If these figures are right, then I am at your disposal."

But the figures were not right at all. Jeschonnek only now realized that
the standard "250-kilo" airlift container on which he had based them in fact
held far less than that load—its name derived solely from the 250-kilo bomb
position it occupied on the bomb racks. Göring winced when the general
confessed this to him, but forbade him to tell Hitler. "I cannot do this to
the Führer—not now!" he said. Telephoning Hitler himself, he repeated that
the Luftwaffe airlift would go ahead, and he invited him to phone Milch if
he still harbored any doubts.

For Hitler the fatal decision was the product of political pride. He had
committed himself publicly to capturing the city, and he could not go back
on that pledge. Later, Göring mentioned operational factors that influenced
him. There was, he said, no reason to believe that the army's main front
line would fall back as far and as fast as it did, and it was the increasing
distances that ultimately thwarted the airlift.

Down in the Berchtesgaden valley that night, November 22-23, 1942,
Göring's train *Asia* slid off toward Paris.

At 10:00 P.M. Hitler's train also departed, in the other direction—returning
to East Prussia. He would arrive at the Wolf's Lair twenty-four hours later.
At 5:40 A.M. on November 24 he sent yet another grim signal to the embattled
General Paulus at Stalingrad: The Sixth Army, this stated, was to stand fast.
"Airlift operation by one hundred more Junkers is starting up."

33

FALL FROM GRACE

A quarter of a million of Hitler's troops were encircled in Stalingrad; they would become Stalin's hostages, and very few would ever be seen alive again. Göring would soon suspect that, given the simultaneous failure to prevent the Allied landings in northwest Africa, only a deal with Stalin would offer Nazi Germany any chance of survival. But, as he admitted to interrogators three years later, whenever he tried to speak frankly to Hitler, his heart sank to the seat of his pants.

At first he did not realize the scale of the Stalingrad tragedy, but that did not make his personal movements any less scandalous or unforgivable.

He arrived in Paris on November 23, 1942, and on the next day—even as Field Marshal von Manstein was signaling to Paulus, "We shall hack you free!"—Göring continued his Paris spree with a visit to the Jeu de Paume. It was to be his last visit to this treasure-house. He was in an ill humor, which he worked off by abusing Hanesse loudly as they toured the little gallery. Archival documents dated that day number among them valuations by Göring's tame assessor, Professor Beltrand, on fifty-eight items, including Van Goghs, a Corot, and (at ten thousand francs) Utrillo's "Suburban Street,"

which latter the Reichsmarschalper's "The Rock Chapel." included a bill of lading typed following items were loaded today"—listing seventy-seven purchased paintings, tapestries, bracs, including a carved oak-ancient sarcophagus, bronze Rosenberg list dated this same less carpets and silk rugs that aboard *Asia* on the twenty-five 2.8 million francs, a Salomon and a Cranach for which he Stalingrad, it seems, had been

The Utrillo purchase illuminated passion for art dealings had private dealer Allan Löbl, an Austro-art library of the Kleinberger Gallery to a Jew by accepting a gift, the Utrillo in exchange. Suspicious forever, Löbl then suggested that as stool pigeons for Göring in France to the Reichsmarschall that he make "the Jewish brothers Löbl but Fräulein Limberger noted that he doesn't do it in any way that Jews! If possible, do it clandestinely

By late November 24, 1942, if he not in Paris, that his air force Stalingrad. In theory, five or six tons of supplies a day. But given would in practice call for 12 to 1: 52 transport planes. Göring had only 750 Ju 52's left, and Hitler the supply of Rommel's armies along, but what could he now do and Zeitzler to tell the Führer may he dictated to his diary on November

*This diary entry, and the Rosenberg collection Gerhardt Engel "diary" published by Prof. in Munich, which has Engel "witnessing" same day!

Nov 1942

GRACE

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oops were encircled in Stalin-
grad; they would become Sta-
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cs) Utrillo's "Suburban Street,"

which latter the Reichsmarschall proposed to exchange for Jodocus de Momper's "The Rock Chapel." Further documents surviving from this jaunt included a bill of lading typed by the Rosenberg task force and headed: "The following items were loaded aboard the Reichsmarschall's special train today"—listing seventy-seven crates of confiscated, bartered, or privately purchased paintings, tapestries, floor- and wall-coverings, and other bric-à-brac, including a carved oak-and-pewter washstand, seven fragments of an ancient sarcophagus, bronze and marble statuary, and silver plate. A further Rosenberg list dated this same November 24, 1942 described thirteen priceless carpets and silk rugs that he had bought. Among the other items loaded aboard *Asia* on the twenty-fifth were five Scipio tapestries, purchased for 2.8 million francs, a Salomon Koninck portrait of an old man in a red beret, and a Cranach for which he had forked out fifty thousand Swiss francs. Stalingrad, it seems, had been forgotten.

The Utrillo purchase illuminated the unsavory demimonde into which his passion for art dealings had propelled him. Seeking high protectors, the Paris dealer Allan Löbl, an Austro-Hungarian Jew, offered Göring the priceless art library of the Kleinberger Gallery as a gift. Not wanting to obligate himself to a Jew by accepting a *gift*, Göring instructed Bruno Lohse to give Löbl the Utrillo in *exchange*. Suspecting that his charmed existence might not last forever, Löbl then suggested that he and his brother Manon Löbl should act as stool pigeons for Göring in Paris. On June 15, 1943, Lohse would suggest to the Reichsmarschall that he formally request the Gestapo to continue to make "the Jewish brothers Löbl" available as informers. Göring approved, but Fräulein Limberger noted the caveat he uttered thus: "Lohse must see he doesn't do it in any way that might link the Reichsmarschall's name with Jews! If possible, do it clandestinely."

By late November 24, 1942, it would have become plain to Göring, were he not in Paris, that his air force had bitten off more than it could chew at Stalingrad. In theory, five or six transport squadrons could airlift five hundred tons of supplies a day. But given the worsening weather conditions, the lift would in practice call for 12 to 15 squadrons, or between 630 and 795 Junkers 52 transport planes. Göring had lost hundreds of them at Crete. They had only 750 Ju 52's left, and Hitler had recently committed most of these to the supply of Rommel's armies in Africa. Richthofen had predicted this all along, but what could he now do to discourage the airlift? "I urge Jeschonnek and Zeitzler to tell the Führer my view, and to harness the Reichsmarschall," he dictated to his diary on November 25, "but he's in Paris."*

*This diary entry, and the Rosenberg documents cited above, render most suspect the General Gerhard Engel "diary" published by Professor Martin Broszat's Institute of Contemporary History in Munich, which has Engel "witnessing" a row between Hitler and Göring at East Prussia this same day!

Dec 1942

Prussia, the Stalingrad situation
Manstein," recorded Richthofen on
decisions taken at top level."

concerned with Stalingrad than with
to everybody's astonishment—
at Hitler's headquarters and de-
altogether, pulling back to a new
posed to fight a completely new
Rommel which front he did
lost, he pointed out, Italy would
that night, Rommel dictated, "Five
of Reichsmarschall. Talked until
the African theater. . . . The Italians
ally serious effort to ferry supplies

by train to Rome that same night,
Reichsmarschall grudgingly packed his
off with the desert commander for
ed the train at Munich, would recall
ly about his art acquisitions and his
mel humored him, and used the two-
early on the thirtieth, as their train
was recording that Göring now fully
anism, Göring ordered twenty of the
nk guns rushed to Rommel's forces,
mediately to Rome to step up Italian

arshal Kesselring. Kesselring pointed
ng the enemy air force within close
Tunisia. Accepting the logic of this,
on no account abandon Tripoli.
Mussolini that evening. In a three-hour
tinned Duce made plain that he too
did not ignore Kesselring's arguments.
a depression. At a joint session the
ring repeat that Tripoli must be held.
ordered on the insufferable. For once,
the first time we are not far removed
's spring! Therefore, we have every
into Tunisia." He promised to pack
Tunis bridgehead—the 10th Panzer
Göring, and Deutschland. "We must
n, and then head for Morocco," he

He proposed laying two immense minefields across the narrow Straits of Sicily, with a safe channel to sluice their transport ships through to North Africa. Germany would supply the necessary mines. "I realize that this is a vast undertaking," he conceded, "but we should think along such lines." Answering the angry comments of the Italian Fleet commander, Admiral Raffaello Riccardi, and German Admiral Eberhard Weichold, the Reichsmarschall jeered, "The navy's prejudices and opinions are out of date."

He cabled Hitler afterward, reporting that the Italians agreed that Rommel's next line should be at Buerat and speaking of Rommel's loss of nerve. He handled the field marshal so tactlessly over lunch that Milch, arriving from Berlin as it ended, found Rommel upstairs weeping with rage at Göring.

After that Göring traveled in arrogant luxury aboard *Asia* down to Naples, where he talked with the dockhands and inspected port defenses. Disregarding Rome completely, he ordered the youthful local Fascist chieftain to take charge of the transport ships to Africa. "Göring," wrote the indignant Ciano on the fifth, "continues to preside over meetings to which he invites civilians, [Guido] Buffarini [Fascist minister of the interior], technical ministers, and so forth. . . . Yesterday, when Göring arrived at the supreme command's headquarters, he was received in the courtyard by our military chiefs!" Ciano put it around that Göring evidently saw himself as a future *Reichsprotektor* of Italy.

On December 11, 1942, the Reichsmarschall reported back at the Führer's headquarters. "[Göring] says," Hitler reported to his staff the next day, "that Rommel has completely lost his nerve."

In private Göring told Hitler that Mussolini was advising them to call off their now-pointless war against Russia. A few days later the despondent Italian foreign minister Ciano and Marshal Ugo Cavallero, chief of the supreme command, came to East Prussia to repeat this advice. Göring and Ribbentrop nodded approval, but Hitler responded with an encouraging catalog of his victories since 1938. The matter was not mentioned again.

His airlift to Stalingrad struggled lamely on. A typical day was December 19: His planes flew only seventy tons into the "fortress." Göring scoffed during Hitler's main war conference that day that the food situation probably was not as bad as General Paulus made out. From the front line a thousand miles away Field Marshal von Manstein sarcastically suggested that the Reichsmarschall himself take over. "Let the 'confident' commander," he declared, "take charge of the sector that he's so confident about!"

On the thirtieth, Richthofen telephoned Carinhall. The distant Reichsmarschall replied with what Richthofen referred to only as "words of fire." "I would have preferred more forces," observed the Luftflotte commander.

1942 winter

train of "representatives of the human race," long-bearded Chaldeans, pigtailed Chinamen, bronzed Ethiopians, Turks, Tatars, Greeks, Mesopotamians, who offered their greetings to the Republic; in reality they were good Parisians cleverly disguised, painted lay figures of the brotherhood of man. On August 10, 1793, the first New Year's Day of the era of Liberty, there was a universal festival, for which David had projected a whole collection of gigantic fooleries: "Liberty" with a colossal Phrygian cap, the "People" as an enormous Hercules with a swinging club, "Nature" a more than life-size female figure from whose breasts water flowed. Simultaneously three thousand birds were let loose to the four winds with labels on their necks inscribed: "We are free, imitate us." Even in its most horrible operations the Revolution always maintained something of French *esprit*. Men and women were bound together and thrown into the water, and this was called "Republican marriage"; small craft were filled with "renegade" priests and sunk, and this was "vertical deportation"; even a word like "*septembriser*" has something striking, pungent, scientific. There is evidenced in all these things the power produced by centuries of intellectual development in the national consciousness, of clear ordering fancy, of bringing up the right word almost automatically in the right place, of thoroughly trained artistic eye.

Meanwhile everyday life, fort comme la mort, went quietly on its way, and the *esprit gaulois* did not allow its good humour to be spoilt. During the September massacres twenty-three theatres were open in Paris. Even the night-sitting which decided the question of the King's life or death was like a theatre performance. "The attendants in the neighbourhood of the Mountain," says Mercier, "were like the box attendants at the opera." The gentlemen provided ices and sweets for their ladies, who marked down each "yes" or "no" with pins on cards; there was betting on the result in the neighbouring coffee-houses. Duke Philippe of Orleans, called *Égalité* — great-grandson of the Regent, father of the later "bourgeois King" Louis Philippe, and perhaps the greatest rascal produced by the Revolution — devoured before his execution a breakfast of two dozen oysters, two cutlets, and a bottle of claret and went to the scaffold carefully dressed in the latest fashion, in a green frock-coat, light piqué waistcoat, yellow

leather breeches, and paint-box and powder

In short, disregarding principles involved, strongest and most to be found in its who than perhaps any other and so negative in its essential character and tions, fanatic and uncitable, romantic to the point of stupidity; and can be said — that tedious, greedy, often evil

We will now briefly of the French Revolution acquaintance with the cause was an enormous. The only possible salvation the reform program was better than he was as the proposals included free close trade corporative all properties. But he the King he prophesied courtiers is that of Ch France had about twenty-one million gained) by agriculture; free of taxation, and it left no return. Moreover, extraordinary rise in price cold. So finally the nation court and to the starvation summon to Versailles for nearly two centuries. They began their session the representatives of Abbé Sieyès, declare

* a phrase D.T. gives to Hitler

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

Blood also played a very important role in Hitler's private life. Apparently he thought a great deal about drinking and sucking blood. He wondered, for example, what the blood soup of the ancient Frisians tasted like; in commenting on the history of the world as the chronic warfare of one people against another, he said, "One creature *drinks the blood* of another. The death of one nourishes the other." And he wrote that the Jew was a spider which "*sucked the people's blood out of its pores.*"

He liked to have his own blood drawn from his body, and enjoyed telling his secretaries what fun it was to watch leaches as they sucked it out. When one of them shuddered and said she didn't like the looks of the horrible animals, he stopped her by saying, "Don't say that. They're sweet little, dear little animals who have done me a great deal of good." He also had his doctor, Morrell, draw his blood and save it in test tubes so that he could gaze at it. Was he afraid that there was something wrong with his own blood?

He liked to taunt members of his intimate circle when he saw them eating meat. Referring to Morell's collection of the Führer's own blood, he said, "I will have blood sausage made from my excess blood as a special culinary treat for you. Why not? You like meat so much." He repeated the offer.^{61a}

Hitler's great concern about infected blood was manifested in dozens of political speeches and was the underlying reason for the Nuremberg Racial Laws, which he called "The Laws for the Protection of German Blood and German Honor." He personally supervised the wording of the text. His private and public speeches are redolent with metaphors of disease, blood poisoning, illness, tubercles, spirochetes, and microbes. Toward the end of February 1942, just after the Wannsee Conference which organized the "final solution" to the Jewish problem, Hitler listed himself among the great benefactors of mankind who had isolated dangerous disease germs: "The discovery of the Jewish virus is one of the greatest revolutions that has ever taken place. The fight we are carrying on is of the same nature as that waged by Pasteur and Koch during the last century. How many diseases have their origin in Jewish virus! . . . We shall only retain our health when we eliminate the Jew."⁶²

Of all the infections to which mortal flesh is prone, Hitler most feared—and was most fascinated by—syphilis. As a young man he talked about the disease by the hour.⁶³ Years later, when he wrote his memoirs, he devoted page after passionate page to the evil power of the disease, insisting that it was the true reason for Germany's defeat in 1918 and proclaiming that the struggle against syphilis was the most important single task confronting statesmen. In reaching for the worst epithet he could hurl at the Weimar Republic, he accused it of surrendering the German nation "to syphilization" by Jews and Negroes.⁶⁴

1918, 1942

The Image and the Man

Cleanliness and Purity

Hitler often talked about dirt, described as being filthy. Thus the satisfactory grades had "*filthy necks*": artists sat on "*the dung-heap of liter*" "*dirty and false.*" To democrats he wrote wretch! Step back, you are *soiling* the lary filthy: "The smell of these caf Added to this were their *dirty* clothes . . . Was there any form of *filth* . . . participate? When carefully cutting of a little Jew, blinded by the sudden li corpse. . . . If the Jews were alone in . . . in *dirt and filth.*" Hitler used the of the Jewish people, *Entjudung* (de speaking of delousing or fumigation.⁶⁵

Hitler was a scrupulously, indeed boyhood friend recalls that during the from hunger, he suffered from a lack pathologically sensitive about anything costs, he would keep his linen and a chancellor, he washed his hair every often, brushed his teeth and rinsed h shaved twice a day and never used told a British journalist that when h resolved that someday he would be ric an open fireplace in every room and t His well-tailored shirts were generally m

Food and Drink

Throughout his life, Hitler seemed food. His speeches on foreign policy req of food supply; private conversations homilies on healthy foods; his library a cial diets. He told his dentist that a par infected his colon and hoped that a i destroy it.⁶⁷

He may have become a vegetarian disorder, but he gave a whole variety meat. He told one doctor that he had youth, but to others he said that prior quantities of meat, particularly fat porl year 1931 as the beginning of his vegeta

GOD: ADOLF HITLER

The Intellectual World of Adolf Hitler

1942 *Notes*

amphantly announced the
a battalion to follow their
out destination:

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mn is employed.⁵⁷

deeply personal about con-
nical bombast and it was
nal necessity. Hitler needed
ed war. "I did not establish
e once said. "The decision
el." ⁵⁸

inated by space. He loved
ad long-columned buildings;
hways and gigantic canals;
ccedes. The vast spaces of

often became public policy,
ng principle of Nazi military
be East and that its pursuit
lse made as early as *Mein*
ivate speeches. So clear and
to quote Hitler directly and

of the frontiers of the year
egree and consequence as to
s of the year 1914 signify
German nation. . . . They
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i must cling unflinchingly to
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tled on this earth.
can drive to the South and
owards the land of the East.
l trade policy of the pre-war
policy of the future. But if
n Europe today we can think
border states.⁵⁹

s and in his second, "Secret
s and gave warning of his

intent: "When nations are in need, they do not ask about legal rights. There is then only one question. Does a people have the power to acquire the soil and territory which it needs? . . . For centuries the cry of our forefathers has rung out: Give us space!" ⁶⁰

Hitler's long dreams of *Lebensraum* in the East seemed about to be fulfilled during the first months of his war against Russia. Again and again, as his Table Conversations show, he talked excitedly about "the grandeur of the open spaces" and planned how he would settle thousands of square miles of land. To those who asked if it would be sufficient to set his frontier at the Urals he replied, "For the present it is enough. . . ." He envisaged vast spaces connected by an *Autobahn* stretching to the Crimea ("our Riviera") and the Caucasus. He saw the Danube—the river of his boyhood—as "the river of the future." It would be connected by an enormous system of canals from the Moselle, Rhine, and the Main to the Dniester, Dnieper, and Don to the Black Sea. The highways and canals "will be studded along their whole length with German towns and around these towns our colonists will settle." Germans would live grandly in "marvelous buildings and palaces" and in "handsome, spacious farms." He left no doubt what would happen to local population, "the ridiculous hundred million Slavs." They would live in "pig-pens" without vaccination or "hygiene cleanliness." He might teach them enough to read German road signs, but anyone who "talks about cherishing the local inhabitant and civilizing him . . . goes straight off into a concentration camp!" ⁶¹

The Concept of the Führer

In Nazi party headquarters in Munich, two portraits were displayed. One was of Hitler's personal hero, Frederick the Great; the other was of himself. Under his picture was a caption which caught the essence of the *Führerprinzip* and set forth a political act of faith in the Third Reich: "Nothing happens in this Movement, except what I wish." A respected historian of Nazi Germany concurs: "There was and there is no National Socialism without Hitler. The two are identical . . . everything else is simply a misunderstanding." ⁶²

The leadership principle was actually never articulated in any detail by Nazi writers. It was not possible to do so, for it rested on faith, not reason. Ultimately it was a mystery. Unable to discuss it rationally, the Nazis often resorted to mysticism and bad metaphysics. Alfred Rosenberg, for example, assures us that "the Führer is the ultimate essence of the dynamic and *völkisch* being"—a construct that could be as meaningfully rendered, "The Führer is the Ultimate Whichness and the Whole Works." Hitler himself tended to speak obliquely about the concept, preferring to say what he considered himself *not* to be: "I never felt myself as a dictator of my people, but only and always their Führer." And again: "I am not the Head of the State in the sense of either being dictator or monarch. I am now the Führer of the German

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

people. I could have given to myself . . . quite other titles." The title itself, he preferred to believe, had been bestowed upon him by admiring women. Thus on the night of 3-4 January 1942 he told his entourage: "There is no finer title than that of Führer. . . . As for the expression 'My Führer' I imagine it was born in the mouth of women." ⁶³

It should be emphasized that Hitler's idea of the leader was not one of the many things he took from Italian Fascism. Mussolini's *Duce* was the leader of the state; the German *Führer* was a great deal more than that. Indeed, any political writer in the Third Reich who attempted to limit the *Führerprinzip* to the leadership of the state was in danger of being called a Fascist—a pejorative term in Nazi Germany. Hitler and those theorists who understood him properly advanced a theory that went far beyond what was called the "impersonal state" to emphasize the unlimited personal power of Adolf Hitler. ⁶⁴

At another, more rarefied level, the Führer was a mystical and magnetic force drawing together Volk and State. He was the *Volksgeist*. "The essential link which in the National-Socialist theory of the state unites the people with the Führer is a mystical conception. . . . He is no representative to whom the people has given a mandate; he is the incarnation of the Spirit of the People, and it is only through his interpretation that the People is led to a full realization of itself." This statement, as Alan Bullock has noted, is "a faithful summary, not of Nazi propaganda, but of sober constitutional and legal opinion as it was expressed in the standard textbooks of the Third Reich." Germany's leading judicial official of the period provided a more succinct summary: "Our constitution is the will of the Führer." ⁶⁵

An important way of connecting the people with their leader was to require that they swear direct personal oaths to him. Training for oath-taking started early. Children of preschool age learned the following song:

We love our Führer
We honor our Führer
We follow our Führer
Until we are men;

We believe in our Führer
We live for our Führer
We die for our Führer
Until we are heroes.

When little boys graduated into the *Jungvolk* at the age of ten the first formal oath was required:

In the presence of the Blood flag which represents our Führer, I swear to devote all my energies, all my strength to the savior of

The Intellectual World of Adolf Hitler

our country, Adolf Hitler.
for him, so help me God. C

Confirmation of the oath was at the age of 14. The ceremony was the Führer's birth:

I consecrate my life to Adolf Hitler; I am ready for Hitler.⁶⁶

When the boy grew up, perience. If he became an educated Germany in swearing to be "likewise, every member of the German oath unique in the history of an oath to one man:

I swear by God this sacred obedience to Adolf Hitler, my people, Supreme Commander, ready as a brave soldier to

Hitler insisted that the order of the chaos of democracy. In a just undue modesty: "It is madness; a majority can suddenly replace genius." ⁶⁸

Hitler's concept of leadership was a different plane from that of any other leader. Stalin's. Royal absolutism, for instance, was the son of the ruler but on the instigation of the ruler "long live the King!" was a cry of the Nazis. Hitler and only Hitler could be true, exerted enormous personal power, and some Marxist theorists called it "personality." That is a key difference in Hitler's personality. Mo dictatorship by claiming that it was a personally accessible corpus of ideas, no such sanction. He was not the Idea made incarnate. He was the intimate arbiter of all matters of state. His whim, quite literally, became law. His action lay in the mythical realm—untranslatable

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

and the defender of racially pure Germania. Of the dozens of portraits painted of the Führer in 1938, Hitler chose this one as the official painting which alone was to be exhibited during the year.¹¹⁰ (See illustrations, following p. 160.)

Hitler shared Wagner's infatuation with the mythical universe of primitive German legend. His two favorite books, which he read again and again as a youth in Vienna, were a volume on architecture and a popular edition of heroic legends entitled *Legends of Gods and Heroes: The Treasures of Germanic Mythology*.¹¹¹ The Nordic mysteries that enthralled the boy continued to intrigue the man. On the night of 25-26 January 1942, while German soldiers froze and bled on the Russian front, Hitler mused about the rhythms of life, the beauties of Greek architecture, the training of dogs, the marvels of science, and the significance of mythology. He had come to believe, he exclaimed, that science would someday actually recapture eerie emanations coming from Wagner's legendary world—vital vibrations transmitting the secrets of the cosmos. Only he and Wagner really understood these vibrations: "When I hear Wagner it seems to me that I hear rhythms of a bygone world. I imagine to myself that one day science will discover in the waves set in motion by the *Rheingold*, secret mutual relations connected with the order of the world."¹¹²

Years before in Vienna he had become terribly excited when his roommate, a student at the Conservatory of Music, told him that among Wagner's posthumous notes was found a sketch for an opera based on the legend of "Wieland the Smith." Hitler knew the story well. Wieland was the half-god son of a giant who had been taken captive by a king who had crippled him and forced him to work as the royal smith. For revenge, Wieland raped the king's daughter and enticed his two sons into the smithy, where he killed them. He then fashioned beakers from the boys' skulls and drank a toast to the spirit of revenge before raising himself on wings he had forged and disappearing into the flaming sky of evening. It was a splendid story, Hitler thought, and he decided to write an opera about it as a tribute to Wagner and an expression of his own genius.

The fact that he had no conception of musical composition and was unable to play an instrument did not deter him. His genius, he said, would surmount any difficulty. "I shall compose the music," he said to his friend, "and you will write it down." Adolf's idea was to take Wagnerian themes and put them into a form that he imagined would have been meaningful to the ancient Teutons. The opera was to be performed on instruments that were used at the time of the Eddas, and Hitler searched excitedly through the volumes of the Hof-Library to discover the kinds of musical instruments known to the ancient Germans. Young Hitler seems justified in thinking that his would be the first Wagnerian opera performed on rattles, drums, bone flutes, and *Luren*—brass wind instruments some two yards long, apparently used in

1942

The Intellectual World of Ado-

German antiquity as a kin villages.

Adolf worked on his tensity, night after night ("Wolf Lake" (where the op plotting and replotting the musical tribute to Wagner r

Wagner's Racial and Pol

Wagner's contribution i Auden called him "the great T. S. Eliot is manifest throu Wagnerian novel; D. H. La Mann, Gauguin, Degas, an selves in being called Wagne him, and Mahler said that h —"after them, nobody." A n tribution to culture by saying any other single artist on the

All of these people wen They might have tempered tl political tracts with the care the creative musical genius, l he who was the primary insp creator of that system himse it "must first know Richard everything the master had familiarity with Wagner's m of my life I come back to him

COMPARISON WITH HITL

It is not entirely clear essays on race, politics, art, i was during his youth in Lin: works were available in muni Hitler was filling his leisure b tracts. The young man who was delighted to learn that hi same as his own. And his life poser must have been strengt were in many ways so much a

Both Hitler and Wagnei geniuses who captivated mil prose. Had their reputations words, both would have been

question is yes, he did. With the awful suspicion that he himself was a deluded psychic reality to determine public

Over and over again, stressed the dangers that he could not get of the blood destroys man, and never again mind." He felt himself to admit directly of universalizing the. Thus the poisoning of humanity. To an in-silment of mixed, and make atonement?" he suggested that the the Gospels the Jews said: "His blood comes to fulfill this curse." One living children was his able-mindedness: "The life. Everyone expects nious parent. But that minded." *

own blood sucked out suggests that he sucked blood. He wanted to know about the precise about his own "Jewish on among Nazi racists. Through meticulous en trying to prove to

story that his own servant, might have tant state papers, the called Blutschutzgesetz documented his concern. If these laws and gave d. Paragraph 3 is especially of emphasizing the household servants of of age." Hitler's own

sp him back
d. surface

grandmother had been no older than 41 when she became pregnant while working, according to Hitler's suspicions, in a Jewish household.⁷

He projected the fear that haunted him onto Matthias Erzberger, the deputy of the Center Party, whom he accused of betraying Germany by accepting the Versailles Treaty. In a revealing passage in his second book, written in 1928, Hitler wrote: "Fate had chosen a man who was one of those principally guilty for the collapse of our people. Matthias Erzberger, . . . the illegitimate son of a servant girl and a Jewish employer. . . ." As the editor of the book has pointed out, the rumor about Erzberger had no basis in fact. The psychologically interesting point, however, is that Hitler repeated the story in writing.⁸

The mere mention of a German girl working as a household servant or charwoman was deeply disturbing to Hitler. His press chief recorded a peculiar incident which he was unable to explain but which indicates that the very thought of a Catholic chambermaid was enough to trigger a violent emotional reaction in Hitler. On this occasion in the 1930s, Hitler was informed that the mother of the manager of the hotel he frequented in Nuremberg, the Deutscher Hof, had advertised for chambermaids in a Catholic magazine. "The Führer flew into a rage entirely disproportionate to the importance of the matter; the manager was dismissed out of hand and professionally blacklisted."⁹

In one of his nightly monologues, in February 1942, the thought was still on his mind. He told his entourage about "a country girl who had a place in Nuremberg in the household of Herr Hirsch" and had been raped by her employer.¹⁰

Hitler did not like to talk about his family. Nevertheless, he showed a remarkable interest in his genealogy. Indeed, he was so concerned about it that he sent his own Gestapo to investigate—presumably to prove that his grandfather could not possibly have been Jewish.* But the investigators could give him no such assurance. The

* In the so-called *Gestapo-Berichte* (Gestapo Reports) on Hitler, which are now in the main archives of the Nazi Party, there are records of repeated investigations into the Führer's family background. Data and documents were collected in 1932, 1935, 1938, and 1940. Two separate investigations were made in 1942 and another during the period December 1943-January 1944. Some of the documents, clearly, were collected by the Party archivists with the marvelous Teutonic name, Attila Bleibtreu, who was simply gathering materials for the official archives. But the Gestapo also took a peculiar interest in Hitler's lineage. A letter of 14 October 1942, written by an SS *Obersturmbannführer* with an undecipherable name, was addressed to the *Reichsführer SS*, Prinz Albrechtstrasse, Berlin (which is to say, to Heinrich Himmler) and stamped "Secret." The letter was enclosed in the transmission of documents on the ancestors of the Führer which had been collected by the Linz branch of the Gestapo. Part of the Gestapo file, now in the Prints and Photographs Division of the Library of Congress, contains an original letter signed by Heinrich Himmler and addressed to "Martin Bormann, Secretary to the Führer." In the letter, Himmler notes formally that he is officially transmitting all his data on Hitler and requests a receipt for the file which he has sent by special courier and marked "Geheime Reichssache!" (Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs, Hitler materials). Himmler would not have sent the file to Bormann if he had been

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

agents of the Gestapo were no more successful than later historians in identifying Hitler's paternal grandfather. The Führer was never relieved of his suspicions.

There is other evidence suggesting that Hitler suspected his own blood was tainted through his father. He had curiously aggressive attitudes toward the villages closely associated with his parents' lives. Albert Speer was unable to explain why Hitler reacted so violently when, after a motor trip in rural Austria in 1942, Speer mentioned to his Führer that he had noticed in the little town of Spital a sign on a farmhouse which read "The Führer Lived Here in His Youth." Speer recalled,

He instantly flew into a rage and shouted for Bormann, who hurried in much alarmed. Hitler snarled at him, how many times had he said that this village must never be mentioned. But that idiot of a *Gauleiter* had gone out and put up a plaque there. It must be removed at once.¹¹

Speer found Hitler's excitement inexplicable because he was usually very much interested in refurbishing the sites of his boyhood in Linz and Braunau. The explanation would seem to be that while Hitler had indeed spent some summers on the farm in Spital, it was associated in his mind as the boyhood home of his father when he had lived there with Nepomuk Hiedler. The mere thought of his father's home and lineage was, apparently, enough to cause an emotional outburst.

The story of what happened to another village associated with Hitler's family is even more interesting. In March 1938, almost directly after taking over Austria, Hitler had a survey made of the lovely little farming village of Döllersheim—the parish where his father had been born, his grandmother buried, and the journeys made to record the birth and name of his father. The purpose of Hitler's survey of 1938 was to ascertain the suitability of using this village as an artillery range for the Wehrmacht. General Knittersched, the commanding general of Military District 17, was given orders directly from Hitler to make the area ready "as soon as possible."¹² The inhabitants were evacuated, and the parish registers removed. Round after round of heavy artillery crashed into the village, demolishing its buildings and rendering graves in the little cemetery unrecognizable. Why was Döllersheim destroyed? There are thousands of empty acres in this part of Lower Austria that would have made excellent artillery ranges. It is

trying to use "the Jewish grandfather" as leverage against Hitler, as is sometimes suggested. It is unlikely that Himmler and many members of the Gestapo would have become involved in investigating so sensitive a subject as Hitler's own ancestry without his explicit approval. It seems reasonable to conclude that Hitler himself had given orders for the investigations in order to prove to himself what he desperately needed to affirm: that he was of pure Aryan stock—or at least as Aryan as his own racial laws required.

1942

The Child As Father to the Man

unlikely that Hitler chose to have had a compulsion of his own Jewish blood by the grave of his grandmother.

Hitler's uneasiness about he made in 1930 when rep his family. "These people," They mustn't know where As we have noted, he felt it for example, that they had c

There is other evidence ness." The two physical characteristics and large noses—were self. Hitler's obsessive concern with the horror of perfume and alcohol because he was afraid that perfume to cover it up might one of his colleagues asked nation," Hitler had a ready answer. He expressed his repugnance to a Munich speech of 29 November

Racial instinct protected the Gentiles from the perfume, where any danger else, the feeling for the being lost. The Jew could

Those who have commented have all said that his least nose and unusually large mouth grown just wide enough to be worth noting Hitler's pointed have, he said, a characteristic Jews from the ghetto of Warsaw gave him a large, sensitive nose, the cruel, vicious

THE FATHER: ALOIS

Alois Hitler's career in the respectable. After nine years senior assistant customs officer to higher collector, the night

1908, 1942

lettee during a Christmas
could never have intimate
want to become "infected,"
in mind. Certainly he was
he was also fascinated by it,
moirs attest. But ever since
had felt that sexual inter-
corrupting and evil. In par-
ticipation. This may help ex-
of military capitulation,
is one word I can never
the word that does not exist
to die in order to escape the

reasons why he could not
imbeciles; he had only one
could have married was Geli,
earlier Messiah had never
political importance of pre-
"If I married I'd lose five
would interfere with his mis-
in worthy of his genius, or,
ment his stature; it was one
the smaller the wife should
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a wife did not appeal to him.

int the conclusion that Hitler
ear that he had latent homo-
ie worried a great deal about
ple, lest he give the impres-
indeed, he did. The noted
Nicolson, who was himself a
nterested in Hitler's feminin-
with a colleague who told him
ne man that he has ever met
almost effeminate." 283 The
ho watched Hitler closely one
a hotel in Bad-Godesberg on
te in his diary: "It was a very
ntly little steps." But a German
for wondering about Hitler's
usion:

As a homosexual, I was fascinated by Hitler's eyes, speech and
walk. But I sensed immediately that he is not one of us.²⁸⁴

Direct evidence from people who knew him well does not support
a claim of overt homosexuality. The recollections of his roommate, for
example, may be suggestive, but they are only that. Kubizek recalled
that when he met his friend at a railway station in Vienna one foggy
February night in 1908, Adolf "greeted me with a kiss and led me to the
lodging where we would spend the night." 285 Kubizek also reported
several occasions when adult homosexuals attempted to seduce Adolf,
but his friend "scrupulously avoided all personal contact with such
men" and talked about homosexuality as one of the "social problems"
he would solve when he established his Reich.²⁸⁶

It is true that Hitler was closely associated with Ernst Röhm and
Rudolf Hess, two practicing homosexuals who were among the very
few people with whom he used the familiar *du*. But one cannot con-
clude that he therefore shared his friends' sexual tastes. Still, during
the months he was with Hess in Landsberg, their relationship must have
become very close. When Hitler left the prison he fretted about his
friend who languished there, and spoke of him tenderly, using Austrian
diminutives: "Ach mein Rudi, mein Hesserl, isn't it appalling to think
that he's still there." 287 One of Hitler's valets, Schneider, made no ex-
plicit statement about the relationship, but he did find it strange that
whenever Hitler got a present he liked or drew an architectural sketch
that particularly pleased him, he would run to Hess—who was known
in homosexual circles as "Fräulein Anna"—as a little boy would run to
his mother to show his prize to her. * Another valet, Krause, agreed that
the relationship with Hess was very close indeed—but that was all he
said about it.²⁸⁸ Finally, there is the nonconclusive but interesting fact
that one of Hitler's most prized possessions was a handwritten love letter
which King Ludwig II had written to a manservant.

A different kind of evidence indicates that Hitler was personally
concerned about latent homosexuality and struggled against it. There is
a remarkable similarity between his attempts to deny any suggestion
of homosexuality and his efforts to prove that he could not possibly be
tainted by Jewish blood. In both cases he used the same defense: he
denied that he was Jewish by persecuting the Jews; he denied that he
was homosexual by attacking homosexuals. Indeed, he made a special
point of doing so.

After he came to power, his government moved immediately
against all types of sexual deviation and sex crimes. But the sharpest
edge in prosecutions was for homosexuality: the number of prosecutions
increased from 3,261 for the years 1931 through 1934 to almost 30,000
between 1936 and 1939.²⁸⁹ It is also suggestive that Hitler grouped

* By 1941, Hitler had revised his high opinion of Hess and declared him offi-
cially insane, damning him publicly as a traitor for his mission to England on
Hitler's behalf but without Hitler's knowledge.

and he said
what can be
my seed?

homosexuals with Jews and Communists as "enemies of the state," and set up a special section of the SS to root them out.²⁰⁰ Apparently his campaign to destroy homosexuality was not entirely successful, for on 15 February 1942 he felt it necessary to set forth a decree punishing homosexuality within the SS with death.²⁰¹

Hitler also revealed fears of homosexuality by protesting so much that he had absolutely no feminine characteristics whatever. He was, he kept insisting, not soft or weak. He was totally masculine—tough, hard, cold, ruthless, brutal. His tendency to think in terms of disjunctive stereotypes about men and women (strong, iron-willed, effective male vs. weak, emotional, incompetent female) is in itself revealing. Such thinking demonstrates a strong conflict and confusion between masculine and feminine natures. To him, sexual differences appeared as exaggerated and mutually exclusive opposites, as roles to be played, rather than as natural attributes of human personality. In Hitler's case—as in Himmler's—the fantasized tough male sex role developed into sadism, murder, and destruction.²⁰²

The question of Hitler's latent homosexuality can also be approached indirectly. It can be stated with some confidence that Hitler must have had latent homosexual tendencies because he showed clear indications of paranoia. This does not mean that all homosexuals are paranoid, but it does mean that all paranoids have fears of homosexuality. The direct connection between homosexuality and paranoia was first noticed by Freud, who concluded that paranoia "invariably arises from an attempt to subdue an unduly powerful homosexual wish."²⁰³ A distinguished American psychiatrist, Robert P. Knight, after years of research on the problems of homosexuality, concluded that "no psychoanalytic theory . . . rests on firmer foundation or has been less frequently attacked by critics of Freud" than the assertion that "an intense homosexual conflict is never absent in a male paranoic . . ."²⁰⁴

In his study of paranoids, Dr. Knight found specific consistent characteristics, all of which fit Adolf Hitler. There is a "terrifically strong" need to deny homosexuality; the very thought of homosexual contact with another man is "completely intolerable." Moreover, the need felt by a paranoid for approval is especially acute; his megalomania is in itself an expression of his need for proof that he is important. There is a high incidence of constipation in paranoid individuals. All paranoids have strong anal components, problems with order and cleanliness, and obsessions with purity and vice and with the impurity or infections of others. Anal sadistic fantasies are directed against the father because he is seen as the rival for the mother's love; the intensity of the drive to be loved is supported mainly "by the intense need to neutralize and eroticize a tremendous hate." When the unconscious hate is so great, the attempt to eroticize it fails and the individual turns to sadism.²⁰⁵

As Knight has pointed out, while homosexual feelings and paranoid delusions may be in bitter conflict, both are, in a sense, dependent on

each other and are defenses possible that Hitler developed homosexual feelings. As lonals, he felt he was successful in his inclinations toward homosexuality.

Perversion?

The question of Hitler's those interested in his person pute. Many responsible observations that there was no perversion either of its existence or its i

The first published statement was made in an article valuable psychological investigation 1943 by Dr. Walter C. Lang clinical psychologists.²⁰⁶ I lished in 1972, reached the f aberrant sexual activity:

It is an extreme form rives sexual gratification defecate on him.²⁰⁷

Historians were not slc History at Oxford Universi Hitler's perversion outrageous. He concluded roundly and w shed of evidence on any of

It is important to emphasize that the subject is emotionally disturbed. There is, of course, often thought of as being "so of historical fact is important. But another category of evidence valuable when handled with sionally ill equipped to inter sult professional psychologists

With regard to Hitler's direct evidence is not entirely former intimate of Hitler's, an interview in Montreal of Hitler's perversion from Gel urging" concerning the nauncle, she said:

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

decision to kill the Jews of Europe was made at the Wannsee Conference, 20 January 1942. By thus "defeating" the Jews, Hitler may have been attempting to demonstrate his own victorious strength and to quiet his growing feelings that he was a weakling and a failure.

All his life he had been plagued by self-doubts about his masculinity and physical powers—doubts that were manifested every time he insisted that he really was not a weak and pitiful person at all. But after 1941 it was increasingly evident that the soft-muscled, slightly paunchy man with the trembling, effeminate hands and the shuffling gait did not at all fit his own picture of the indomitable, brutal, all-conquering, masculine Führer. Indeed, each military defeat unnerved him further and required more and more proof that he was the ice-cold, steel-hard, and ruthless victor of his fantasies. He could not play that role by conquering Russia or the Western allies; he therefore manufactured ruthless and brutal "victories" over the Jews and conquered his helpless enemy in the gas ovens of the greater Reich. Walter C. Langer recognized this sphere of weakness in Hitler's personality and foresaw the consequences. In 1943, long before he and his colleagues had knowledge of Hitler's death camps and massacre of the Jews, Dr. Langer predicted that Hitler would compensate for self-doubt and defeat by increasingly ruthless acts of destruction and brutality:

Each defeat will shake his confidence still further and limit his opportunities for proving his own greatness to himself. . . . He will probably try to compensate for his vulnerability . . . by continually stressing his brutality and ruthlessness . . . for only in this way [can] he prove to himself that he is not a weakling . . . but made of the stuff becoming his conception of what a Victor should be.⁵⁷

Finally, Hitler massacred the Jews because of one of his fantasies. He really did believe that Jews were the archenemy of all mankind and that in destroying them, as he had promised 20 years earlier, he was "doing the work of the Lord."

Thus did private fantasy become public policy.

Military Consequences of Genocide

Hitler's personal phobia about Jews contributed to Germany's military defeat. As Albert Speer has reported, a key reason why Germany never attempted to develop the atomic bomb was that the Führer distrusted what he called "Jewish physics." And his personal orders to kill all the Jews of Europe resulted in serious disruptions of the national war effort. The sheer logistics of collecting, transporting, and disposing of so many "units"—as Eichmann called human beings—were immense. And the project required other sacrifices. By 1944 the shortage of labor created by removing Jews from the work force ran to some

1942

From Private Neurosi:

4 million men; the
to billions of Reichs

Viewed pragmatically:
militarily disastrous
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THE BENEFITS

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1942

ETHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

was made at the Wannsee Conference "defeating" the Jews, Hitler may have been his own vicious strength and a weakling and a failure.

by self-doubts about his masculinity were manifested every time he was a weak and pitiful person at all. But it was that the soft-muscled, slightly feminine hands and the shuffling gait of the indomitable, brutal, all-powerful, each military defeat unnerved him more proof that he was the ice of his fantasies. He could not play the Western allies; he therefore maneuvered over the Jews and conquered the greater Reich. Walter C. Dillmann in Hitler's personality and long before he and his colleagues planned and massacre of the Jews, Dr. Goebbels compensate for self-doubt and defeat with violence and brutality.

confidence still further and limit his own greatness to himself. . . . He was for his vulnerability . . . by confidence and ruthlessness . . . for only in himself that he is not a weakling . . . his conception of what a Victor

was because of one of his fantasies. He was the archenemy of all mankind and promised 20 years earlier, he was

public policy.

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ews contributed to Germany's military, a key reason why Germany lost the bomb was that the Führer disbelieved. And his personal orders to kill serious disruptions of the national economy, transporting, and disposing of human beings—were inner sacrifices. By 1944 the shortage of labor from the work force ran to some

From Private Neurosis to Public Policy

4 million men; the value in war production lost to the Reich amounted to billions of Reichsmarks.⁵⁸

Viewed pragmatically, genocide was counterproductive. During the militarily disastrous years of 1942-1945, Germany simply could not afford to embark on the "Final Solution" to a problem which never in fact existed. It made no sense. But Hitler did not see it that way. His sense of priorities in a national crisis was as clear as it was horrendous: *nothing mattered more to him than killing Jews.*

Thus did the pathological fears and rages of one man send millions of innocent people to their death and decide the fate of a nation.

THE BENEFITS OF IDENTITY DIFFUSION

The Führer could have become the greatest German actor.

—General Jodl

In retrospect, I am completely uncertain when and where he was ever really himself, his image not distorted by playacting.

—Albert Speer

A man who had observed Hitler's face closely on many occasions concluded that no photograph could possibly capture the person hidden behind the image. The face, he said, "always amazed me because of the multiplicity of expressions it contained." It was as though it were composed of a whole series of individual elements without adding up to a single total. . . . A photographer, by selecting only a single moment out of context, could show only one aspect, thereby giving a false impression of the duplicity or multiplicity of being which lay behind it. . . .⁵⁹

Without knowing it, the observer was giving a good description of a salient characteristic of a borderline personality: one who does not quite "add up." Such people lack an integrated concept of self, and experience "identity diffusion." As a result, Dr. Kernberg has written, the borderline displays a "chameleon-like quality." He constantly plays different roles; he "acts as if he were someone else."⁶⁰

Hitler was indeed a "multiplicity of being." Since he was besieged by doubts of his own identity and stability, it became terribly important to convince himself, over and over again, that he was a man of poise and power, one who could dominate any other person or group. One of the best means of such self-persuasion was for him to act the part and thus become—at least for the moment—the person he wanted so much to be. But he was not always sure who that person was. Such inner confusion helps to account for two facts about his early

* D.T. We were on a final push, the pragmatists had nothing to do with it. We needed to keep behind an echo, a measuring, a cloud of horror

the confidence of the cult of the Führer, which could never digest, turned into overcome, or, perhaps, more

D.T.

THE PSYCHOPATHIC GOD: ADOLF HITLER

demand heavy sacrifices from the German people for the war effort. One of the anomalies of World War II was that two Western democracies, England and America, had far more stringent controls over the economy than Hitler's dictatorship. Hitler apparently felt that he could not call on the German people for the kind of personal sacrifices accepted as a matter of course in Churchill's England. Indeed, the Nazi dictator was leery about interruptions in the flow of consumer and luxury goods. In 1942, after three years of war, production of consumer goods was only 3 percent below peacetime. For a time in 1942, Speer tried to raise that percentage, but the most he could manage was a 12 percent cutback. Even then, after only three months of relative austerity, Hitler changed his mind and decreed the resumption of production "for the general supply of the population."⁹⁸ Not even after Stalingrad and the opening of a second front in Normandy did Hitler dare cut luxury items. Hundreds of tons of wallpaper and cosmetics, hair-set lotions, hair dryers, and perfume continued to be manufactured.⁹⁹

Hitler's mistrust of others was also reflected in his foreign policy. It was largely responsible for the serious misjudgment which turned his attack on Poland into a general war. He felt free to invade Poland on 1 September 1939 because he had used his own standards of suspicion and duplicity in evaluating England's intentions. He simply could not believe that Britain would honor her treaty with the Poles. A general's private diary for 14 August 1939 records Hitler's scornful dismissal of the argument that the invasion of Poland might precipitate a European war: "Why should England fight? *One does not die for an ally.*"¹⁰⁰

Among the many reasons he attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941 was his conviction, against all evidence, that his ally Stalin was about to launch an attack on him. "My own personal nightmare," he said, "was that Stalin . . . sooner or later would abandon us and go over to the enemy. . . . It was absolutely certain that one day or other [he] would attack us."¹⁰¹ His declaration of war on America was also prompted, in part, by the conviction that Roosevelt was about to declare war on him.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ROOTS OF AGGRESSIVE WAR

I am totally convinced that this struggle does not differ one hair's breadth from the battle which I once fought out within myself.

—Adolf Hitler

There are, regrettably, sound psychological reasons why, throughout history, there have been "wars and rumors of war." Warfare permits the individual to act out in socially approved ways what in peacetime he is required to repress: impulses of aggressive rage and violent

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D.T. Here I was combatting ideology. I could not explain to him how much he would give to Roosevelt.

From Private Neurosis to Pub

destruction. Human capacity also given an outlet in a devotion to their country a Sadistic and masochistic war.¹⁰²

Such emotions may have made them especially impulsive. He held a position of total power. When he wanted war, a war of a deeply split borderline personality by projecting a view of the Jews in particular against him; England and both societies, were about the borderline patients of "stirrings" because it was irrefutable before they destroyed him. being attacked; the Jews as attempting to destroy the Me

Aggression was also a personal inadequacy, weakness prove his strength. He would doubt his power. This remark after unleashing V always been a part of me." war and found it a challenge was revealed in a speech of:

I know that this [war] before the German people the hardest man that German centuries, but I also possess

But above all I believe unconditionally!

I am totally convinced breath from the battle [den ich einst im Innern]

I am convinced that I can in order to have me lead

To fulfill his personal battle. The war was not, as forced upon a reluctant Hitler the very *raison d'être* of his

by declaring the strength of the I desire victory

1942 #

armies would soon be strong enough not only to halt the German offensive, but to drive us back along the whole front. By the winter of 1942-1943 Russian industry would be geared to an overwhelming production of armaments. Guerilla warfare in the German rear areas would be greatly intensified, tying down a large number of German troops and seriously disrupting our long supply lines.

The Japanese feared that in the end Germany would have expended all her military strength in a hopeless campaign. Because of the Western Allies' hesitation about actively supporting Russia by opening a second front, a compromise peace with Stalin was still a real possibility. According to Jahnke, the Japanese leaders were unanimous in this view of the situation and an approach to Germany either directly or indirectly was likely.

We discussed the problem for a long time. Jahnke thought the chief opponent of such a solution would be Ribbentrop, whose narrow mind would be unable to understand the situation. Himmler was too much under Hitler's influence to act independently and was very muddled in his thinking. Goering was no longer of importance; his star had set since the failure of the air offensive against Britain. Since then Goering seemed to have lost nearly all interest in the great military events. This was attributed by many to his increasing dependence on morphia, by others to his excessive and increasingly morbid indulgence in a life of luxury.

At this time Himmler sent me to report to Goering at his beautiful country house north of Berlin—named 'Karin hall', after his first wife—on the suggested incorporation of the 'Goering Research Establishment' into Department VI. This Establishment had been built up by Goering with the help of naval experts for the supervision of all telephone and wireless surveillance, including monitoring and tapping. Every single telephone communication inside Germany and the German-occupied European territories could be tapped and often yielded a rich crop of valuable information. Hitler's long distance calls were all monitored and recorded, and if necessary passed on to the appropriate Government departments for reference or action. Once, a production figure on German armaments mentioned by Hitler in a conversation with Mussolini caused the greatest confusion because Hitler himself had been misinformed.

When I arrived at 'Karin the entrance hall. It was vast oak beams and heavy old church. After I had waited ing doors was thrown open trance, holding his Marshal nobleman, toga, sandals as were meeting the Emperor.

Goering smiled amiably next room. He motioned down behind a small table taining pearls and antique j kept fingering the jewellery. I had finished, all he said w with Himmler'.

A week later Himmler : furious about this. He rav 'that king of the black ma end of 1943 Goering ha respect.)

Thus, already in 1942, th any interest in effecting a cc Jahnke considered to be c whole circle. But Heydrich that it was doubtful wheth Hitler decisively. Jahnke Bormann at this stage about opinion Bormann was an confidant. Heydrich was sy fact broached the matter decisive result.

Four weeks later, in Apri a Japanese attempt to estab man Naval Attaché in Toki that Hitler might even wa personally. But at the end of trop had won after all, and cially rejected by the Germ

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about guerrilla warfare which to Himmler: every guerrilla movement, must in which binds the guerrillas together. This idea must be to renew the energy and and the highest qualities for systematic partisan warfare remains always the decisive problem during many a and also with our Russian and become clear to me that were systematically developing partisan units which exploited he was being conducted on

in which the Germans were and basis for their partisan "offensive" (order to shoot all about the 'sub-human' shootings carried out by units operating with the all constituted arguments arousing a ruthless spirit

in reality Stalin welcomed whose validity I was practice of them stated that the warfare was ruthlessness in would make the population committed must always that a hesitant population resistance. If, because of had to be punished, this punishment would seem to be the population would then the struggle.

to the NKVD on how it

was to support the partisan bands. The NKVD was to send some of its best and most reliable agents as advisers and informers into the German Army and administrative offices. Their task, apart from keeping in close touch with the partisan units, either by sending false or accurate information, was to use their wits in influencing and inciting the German occupation authorities to take harsh measures against certain sections of the population, such as Jews and Kulaks. Executions, liquidations and deportations were, of course, to be presented as brutalities consciously committed by the Germans against the Russian people. It was a truly devilish programme which the Russian leaders seemed to have evolved, and its effects were no less brutal than the measures taken by the Germans.

Himmler and Heydrich did not believe the Russian leaders had the time or ability to work out such complicated ideas. I told them that I had based my views on the reports which had come in, and on the professional views of my advisers. Furthermore, I added, the Russian leaders seemed to have a much sounder knowledge of their own people than we had, deceived as we were by our own propaganda creation, the 'sub-human' Russian. For making this point I got a serious dressing down, and for a while had to keep my mouth shut.

Later I took up the subject once more, but this time very cautiously. I suggested that it would be necessary to offer the Russian prisoners working for us an ideal worth risking their lives for. National Socialism was not suitable; its ideals were alien to them. The obvious thing would be to hold out the hope of eventual autonomy. But no one was interested. They went on with the old policy of putting Russians in uniforms and giving them better conditions. They gave them medals and lectured them on the high German standard of living and the efficient organization of the German State. With some of them this policy showed results, but the majority needed something better suited to the Russian character, something which would satisfy their eternal longing for independence.

In later conversations I was able to speak to Himmler more openly about these problems. Towards the end of 1942, he showed a much more receptive attitude, but because of his basic

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My work had forced me to realize that our leaders had no real understanding of conditions abroad. Their actions were determined entirely by their own narrow political views. The Foreign Office did nothing to change this situation. There may have been people employed in that department who saw things just as I did, but they played no part in the formation of the political will. None of them was willing to advance from recognition of the facts to the inevitable conclusion—that the idea of final victory was impossible; still less would they stand up for their opinions in front of their superiors.

I began to think seriously about the problem and came to the conclusion that as long as the Reich had the power to fight, it would also have the power to bargain. There was, in fact, still time to achieve a compromise with our enemies, but one would have to calculate coolly like a broker: it is better to lose fifty per cent than risk complete bankruptcy and lose everything.

At this time, in August 1942, our evidence showed that Stalin was dissatisfied with the western Allies. That this seemed to offer a realistic basis for doing business was confirmed by the Japanese for, in spite of the passing setbacks we had suffered on the eastern front, they still considered that compromise negotiations with Russia were possible.

The situation in the year 1942 had developed into a race for time. Britain was too weak to act alone, and was waiting for the arrival of American strategic material. Stalin was waiting not only for the delivery of material, but for effective relief in the opening of a real second front. So long as the western Allies delayed their invasion, no matter from what motives, there was a good chance of conducting compromise negotiations. Germany's superiority of power at this time placed her in a good position to bargain with both sides. It was important therefore to establish contact with Russia at the same time as we initiated our negotiations with the West. An increasing rivalry between the Allied Powers would strengthen our position. Such a plan had to be launched very carefully, however, and with regard to Russia we were handicapped by previous Japanese attempts to act as mediators, for we could negotiate more freely if we did not have to consider Japanese interests.

the Sino-Japanese compromise negotiations. This took up the entire morning. I had almost finished my resumé when Himmler suddenly changed the subject and said he was happy that I had made good friends with Kersten, and begged me to improve my relationship with Langbehn as well.

It seemed to me the time had arrived for me to broach the subject that was most on my mind. Himmler must have noticed that I had something to think about, for he said to me suddenly, 'You look so serious—are you unwell?'

'On the contrary, Herr Reichsfuehrer,' I said, 'the treatment I had from Dr Kersten today has toned me up considerably. I know how great the demands on your time are, but the most important part of my report is not in my briefcase—that's almost empty now; it's in my head. But I don't want to begin until I can be sure that you really have got time to listen in peace.'

Himmler, suspicious as always, became a little nervous. 'Something unpleasant? Something personal?' he said.

'Nothing like that, Herr Reichsfuehrer. It is simply that I want to place before you a matter that involves a most important and difficult decision.'

At this point Brandt was called in and Himmler made certain decisions, dictated several directives, and postponed various appointments and conferences. Then he invited me to lunch with his adjutants and secretaries and asked me to be ready to report to him again at four o'clock. In order to keep this appointment he set back his trip to Vinnitza.

During the meal I consciously restrained myself, and noticed how Himmler's curiosity was increasing. Several higher Wehrmacht and SS Leaders were present and Himmler was especially gay and jovial. He had the ability to change his personality as easily as he changed his uniform, from being the cool executive to being an amusing and pleasant host.

After lunch Himmler excused himself and disappeared with his shadow, Brandt. About half an hour later I was called into his study. He came from behind his desk, a thing he very rarely did, and asked me whether I wanted anything to drink, then invited me to sit down with him and lit a cigar—which was also unusual for him. 'Well, please begin,' he said cheerfully.

I asked his permission than usual because of the Court there once asked until in the end I had to Well, the next morning: The first thing he said to This remark had an iron double meaning: 'to recall'

'You know, Herr Reichsfuehrer, the preparatory work for the Court there once asked involved a tremendous amount of work until in the end I had to Well, the next morning: The first thing he said to This remark had an iron double meaning: 'to recall'

At this Himmler smiled and told the orderly to bring said with a smile, 'Perhaps'

I went on: 'The President's things about my report. The other was that as I'd quit I was writing about, he gave advice which he hoped I said that going through the points which could have why I hadn't dealt with said, why did I not give rigidly to the same line often have to face very do well to think of his vision. "Make those words he said." Looking Himmler see, Herr Reichsfuehrer, advice given me by a very you this question: In what your alternative solution'

The ensuing silence lasted quite aghast. He could not remarks and must have been Slowly he came to life. As grew louder until he was

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I asked his permission to start in a somewhat broader manner
than usual because of the extensive nature of the matter I wished
to raise. He nodded.

'You know, Herr Reichsfuehrer,' I began, 'that I did my final
preparatory work for the Bar in Düsseldorf. The President of the
Court there once asked me to prepare a draft judgement; it in-
volved a tremendous amount of work and I kept putting it off
until in the end I had to do the whole job in two or three days.
Well, the next morning I was told to report to the President.
The first thing he said to me was, "I'm sure you'd like a cigar."' This
remark had an ironical undertone, for in German it has a
double meaning: 'to receive a cigar' is to be given a rebuff.

At this Himmler smiled for the first time, pressed a bell, and
told the orderly to bring me a good cigar. When I protested, he
said with a smile, 'Perhaps you prefer the President's?'

I went on: 'The President told me that there were two good
things about my report. One, I had been punctual with it. The
other was that as I'd quite failed to get any grip on the matter that
I was writing about, he could take the occasion to give me some
advice which he hoped I'd remember for the rest of my life. He
said that going through the evidence he had noticed three or four
points which could have led to different conclusions, and asked
why I hadn't dealt with these alternatives in my draft. Also, he
said, why did I not give an alternative verdict instead of keeping
rigidly to the same line of argument? Later in life, he said, I would
often have to face very difficult problems indeed, and would then
do well to think of his words: never forget the alternative solu-
tion. "Make those words one of the basic principles in your life,"
he said.' Looking Himmler firmly in the eye I went on, 'Well, you
see, Herr Reichsfuehrer, I have never been able to forget this
advice given me by a very wise man. May I be so bold as to ask
you this question: In which drawer of your desk have you got
your alternative solution for ending this war?'

The ensuing silence lasted a full minute. Himmler sat before me
quite aghast. He could not have misunderstood my introductory
remarks and must have realized quite soon what I was driving at.
Slowly he came to life. At last he spoke, softly, then in a voice that
grew louder until he was almost shouting at me. 'Have you gone

mad? You've been working too hard. Shall I give you five weeks' leave right away? Are you losing your nerve? And anyhow, how dare you talk to me in this way?

I remained completely cool. I waited until his excitement had subsided, then assuming for the moment a detached tone, I said, 'Herr Reichsfuehrer, I knew you'd go on like this. In fact, I thought it might be even worse. But I should like you to consider that even such a great man as Bismarck at the height of his power always kept an alternative solution in mind; and such a solution is possible only as long as one can keep one's freedom of action. Today Germany still stands at the zenith of her power. Today we are still in a position to bargain—our strength makes it worthwhile for our opponents to seek a compromise with us.'

In broad strokes I outlined to him the relationship of forces in the world as it appeared to me. As I went on he became noticeably calmer. My own assurance had its effect upon him. During the course of my remarks he became more and more interested. Every now and again he nodded. By the time I had finished, after an hour and a half, he had interrupted me only a very few times, and I was able to repeat my question in a different form: 'You see, Herr Reichsfuehrer, that was my motive when I asked you at the beginning—in which drawer have you got an alternative solution for the war?'

He got up suddenly and now he was pacing up and down the room. Presently he stopped and said, 'As long as that idiot Ribbentrop advises the Fuehrer, this cannot possibly be done.'

I said immediately that of course Ribbentrop would have to go. 'He is always fighting with the Reichsmarschall' (meaning Goering) 'and as the one wants to be Duke of Burgundy, let us make Ribbentrop Duke of Brabant.' Himmler understood the jest, and also the serious purpose behind my words. He went to his desk and opened the large map of his Brockhaus atlas. For several minutes he studied it intently. I, too, had risen for the sake of courtesy and he called me over to his desk.

'How will your ideas work out in practice?' he said. 'I think you overestimate Russia's strength, but I am very worried about what's going to happen when American war production really gets going. How—how are we to go about it? In my present posi-

tion I might have some chance get him to drop Ribbentrop if port. But we could never let He'd wreck the whole scheme compromise with Stalin. And

He spoke almost as if to him thumbnail, then twisting his signs that he was really concentring, and said, 'Would you be ing right away—without our weakness on our part?'

I assured him that I could.

'Very well. But how do you won't act as a boomerang? Western Powers' determination

I said, 'On the contrary, Here are started in the right way, it v

'All right,' Himmler said, 'ti ceed?'

I explained that such operations through the official channels should go through the political in case of misfiring, the person cially discredited and dropped. essential for the other side to k they would be dealing had real were prepared to appoint such would promise to get rid of Rib I would take up contact with t removal would prove to them and that our plan had power rumours of a new Foreign Ministry policy would strengthen m

Here Himmler interrupted me to dig up Fraenzchen again?— time our Ambassador to Turkey let's forget that for the moment. more carefully. Do you really t

Summer 1942 #

XXXII

MUELLER

*Himmler in financial difficulties—Bormann's influence on Hitler—
First suspicions of Mueller's loyalty—His criticism of Party leaders—
Report of his death in Russia*

DURING THE summer of 1942, a serious conflict arose between Himmler and Bormann in which Himmler continually made small tactical errors which Bormann always exploited to the full. Himmler's biggest mistake, about which he told me a year afterwards, was made during a sort of truce between them in 1943.

Himmler's first marriage had been unhappy, but for his daughter's sake he had not sought a divorce. He now lived with a woman who was not his wife, and they had two very nice children to whom he was completely devoted. He did what he could for these children within the limits of his own income, but although, after Hitler, Himmler had more real power than anyone else in the Third Reich, and through his control of the many economic organizations could have had millions at his disposal, he found it difficult to provide for their needs. He therefore asked Bormann, his greatest opponent within the Party, for a loan of 80,000 marks out of Party funds—a completely incomprehensible action.

When he told me about this he said that it was for a building loan, and asked whether I thought he had not been taken advantage of over the rate of interest. What could I say? I suggested he should repay the loan immediately and secure a mortgage on his house, which could easily be arranged. But he rejected this with an air of resignation. It was a completely private matter and he wanted to act with meticulous rectitude; under no circumstances did he want to discuss it with the Fuehrer. Obviously he could not afford to pay a high rate of interest, or for that matter make any other payment out of his official income.

At about this time I began to see Bormann. He was a short, stocky man with a large head. His head was always pushed to one side, and he had the face of an opponent. His fingers were covered with black hair. This was really grotesque. If I thought Bormann seemed to be in meetings with him I had an impression of his influence with Hitler.

In Hitler's entourage it was a constant presence, made himself known in anything which concerned Hitler in all large and small decisions. Indeed, Bormann was a part of Hitler's daily life. He had the right word with which he pushed new interests into the Fuehrer's worries. He also had a great influence on Hitler, particularly in the decisions of the régime became, the decisions of such a war matter. The greater the burden on Hitler, Bormann's continual presence with his stalwart and unflexible simplify complicated matters. He summarized the essential points. He did this that even his solution. I saw examples of this by his exemplary manner of reporting.

I once discussed Bormann with Himmler. He confirmed my supposition. He told me that Bormann was a great influence. Again and again I thought though really it's my duty to get out-maneuvring him without being responsible for a lot of the F.

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At about this time I began seeing a good deal of Bormann. He was a short, stocky man with rounded shoulders and a bull neck. His head was always pushed forward a little and cocked slightly to one side, and he had the face and shifty eyes of a boxer advancing on his opponent. His fingers were short, thick and squarish and covered with black hair. The contrast between him and Himmler was really grotesque. If I thought of Himmler as a stork in a lily-pond, Bormann seemed to me like a pig in a potato field. At later meetings with him I had ample occasion to consider the source of his influence with Hitler.

In Hitler's entourage it was Bormann who, through his constant presence, made himself indispensable simply by habit. In anything which concerned Hitler, Bormann was there. He shared in all large and small decisions, in all the excitements, rages and fatigues. Indeed, Bormann governed the range of these events in Hitler's daily life. He had developed great skill in finding exactly the right word with which to change unpleasant subjects and to push new interests into the foreground—in short, to dispel the Fuehrer's worries. He also had a cast-iron memory, which was invaluable to Hitler, particularly in the last years, for the more absolute the régime became, the more difficult it was to reconcile the decisions of such a war machine with the Fuehrer's commands. The greater the burden on Hitler's nerves, the more soothing was Bormann's continual presence at all hours of the day and night with his stalwart and unflagging spirit. He had the ability to simplify complicated matters, to present them concisely and to summarize the essential points in a few clear sentences. So cleverly did he do this that even his briefest reports contained an implicit solution. I saw examples of this several times and was so impressed by his exemplary manner that I decided to adopt similar methods of reporting.

I once discussed Bormann's personality with Himmler, who confirmed my supposition. 'The Fuehrer has become so accustomed to Bormann that it's very difficult indeed to lessen his influence. Again and again I have had to come to terms with him, though really it's my duty to get him out. I hope I can succeed in out-mancuvring him without having to get rid of him. He's been responsible for a lot of the Fuehrer's misguided decisions; in fact,

end of 1942

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XXXIII

MY HOPES FRUSTRATED

*The case of Horia Sima—Ribbentrop and Under-Secretary Luther—
An agreement broken—Luther's arrest—Himmler's attitude towards
peace proposals revised—Ribbentrop's ban on their further discussion—
Talks with the Swiss Secret Service—Ernst Kaltenbrunner—His
hatred of Heydrich—Our working relationship*

AT THE end of 1942 the leader of the abortive Iron Guard putsch, Horia Sima, managed to escape from the SD school at Bergenbrueck, near Bernau. Mueller had organized a big search, but had not reported Sima's escape to Himmler. Nine days later Himmler telephoned to me in a terrible state and told me to go to Mueller immediately and do all I possibly could to help recapture Sima. I realized at once how dangerous this situation was for Himmler, and put all the resources of my organization to work on the case. Within four days I had got Horia Sima back to Germany.

Meanwhile, Ribbentrop had heard of his flight, and had also found out that Hitler knew nothing about it. This brought the bitter struggle between Ribbentrop and Himmler to a climax. Ribbentrop went straight to Hitler and told him that Horia Sima was again attempting a putsch from Italy. Without even ascertaining the facts, Hitler flew into a terrible rage, for he had given Marshal Antonescu his word of honour not to release Horia Sima until they had mutually agreed that he should do so. Ribbentrop managed to phrase his report so cleverly that Hitler was firmly convinced that Himmler and I were again trying to launch a plot in Rumania. He became mad with rage and for three hours shouted that this was a scandal and—referring to the black uniform of the SS—that he would smoke out this 'Black Plague' with fire and sulphur.

For us the whole thing was an ill-starred business from the very beginning. And Hitler's attitude was, after all, quite understand-

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The atmosphere was extremely tense for about ten days, then very slowly Himmler began to re-establish his position. However, this ridiculous incident had decisive repercussions and enabled Ribbentrop to strengthen and re-establish his own position, while it took Himmler a considerable time to regain Hitler's confidence. Mueller, to justify himself, wrote long reports. I alone was left to hold the baby, for of course Ribbentrop could not now be removed, and my credit was damaged with the western Powers, to whom we had promised that Ribbentrop would be got rid of. They no longer believed in the seriousness of our intentions and regarded the whole thing as a desperate attempt to upset the unity of the Allies. It is even possible that news of our first abortive peace feelers reached Roosevelt and that this may have decided him to put the 'Unconditional Surrender' resolution before Churchill at Casablanca.

My discussions with Himmler at this time about his failure to keep his promise concerning Ribbentrop were stormy. He was deeply depressed and seemed completely to have lost his nerve, and it was only with the greatest effort that I could get him to give further authorization for my plans.

Here I should like to digress for a moment in order to refer to the important and tragic part played in the moves against Ribbentrop by Under-Secretary of State Luther, of whom I have already made some mention. In spite of an estrangement that had developed in his relationship with Ribbentrop, Luther, who supported our ideas, had managed to persuade him of the importance of the Secret Service in the conduct of the war. The feelings between the two of them were aggravated by difficulties in their private relationships, particularly those that existed between their wives. Luther no longer felt able to meet the Ribbentrops' continual and increasing demands on the large secret Foreign Office funds for which he was responsible. So far he had managed to manipulate them in order to meet his chief's extravagant way of life, but things had got to such a pitch that he began to doubt Ribbentrop's sanity. For instance, the tapestries in the Ribbentrops' house had to be changed four times because their colours

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were not precisely to Frau Ribbentrop's liking. Luther felt that he could not go on working under such conditions, and though he did not wish to be disloyal to Ribbentrop, whose closest confidant he was, he did not hesitate to tell me how things stood.

In view of what had passed between Himmler and myself at our long conference at Zhitomir in August, I felt that the time was ripe to inform Luther, very judiciously, of my plan for peace negotiations. I also mentioned to him the unfortunate influence which Ribbentrop had on Hitler, and begged him to help me to get material which might enable me to bring about Ribbentrop's downfall. Luther was convinced by my arguments, and indeed was very pleased that Himmler was adopting such a reasonable policy. It would now be much easier for Luther to forget his earlier resentment against the 'black corps', as he called it. Mentioning the continual difficulties he had had with the SS leadership, he said, 'Some of these gentlemen are utterly unreasonable—they want the earth. They don't understand my difficulties at the Foreign Office, and especially with Ribbentrop. I know they're constantly slandering me to Himmler, so I'm very glad of this opportunity to improve relations with him. I'll certainly give you all the help I can to ensure the success of your efforts.'

Towards the end of the year at a reception given by the Italian Ambassador, Signor Attolico, Luther met Himmler again after a long estrangement. I had told Himmler all about Luther's attitude, so he was well-disposed towards him and received him in the most friendly and even jovial manner. Luther in return began to behave like an ill-bred upstart. In spite of the many foreigners present, he buttonholed Himmler as though they were bosom friends and began to talk shop. It was the worst mistake he could have made. Himmler was extremely sensitive about such things, especially when he felt himself in the public eye; but though he was irritated he remained polite and friendly. This only encouraged the unfortunate Luther to further unwelcome intimacies.

The next day they both telephoned me. 'You know,' said Himmler, 'that man Luther really is a common, unpleasant sort of fellow—slimy and uncouth.'

I tried to defend Luther as well as I could. I said that he had prob-

ably been over-flattered by Himmler's attempt to open his heart to him. I persuaded Himmler to forget the incident.

Then Luther's clipped speech, over the telephone: 'I must say, my sport—he's a man one can talk to, got on well with him. My boss concerned.' He went on for some time, gestured that I should call on him to have a talk.

When we met I gave him a good talking to. I told him that Himmler was a man of a very unstable disposition who needed time to settle down. I insisted also that he should make no more of his outbursts without telling me, so that I should have a word with Himmler beforehand. Luther said he would do this.

Then one day in January 1943, Luther was in a state of great excitement. He had piled a file against Ribbentrop's personal behaviour, raised serious objections, and indicated that he was obviously not satisfied. He had sent this report to various officials in the Foreign Minister's office, in the hope of bringing about Ribbentrop's removal. They were waiting for Himmler to say what he thought. Luther therefore wanted to launch his attack without delay, and asked Himmler immediately.

I had to think the situation over. I had to decide whether to have acted in defiance of our agreement. I had to ascertain whether Himmler had managed to maintain his position with Hitler sufficient to justify an attack against Ribbentrop. On the other hand, I had to consider Luther's move, though it would have been premature. Consequently, I waited for Himmler's approval, which came the very day.

1941,

Feb. '42

XXXVI

THE DOWNFALL OF ADMIRAL CANARIS

A blunder by the Abwehr—Heydrich orders a surveillance of some Abwehr personnel—I sound Canaris on a leakage of information—A Catholic intrigue—Friction between Canaris and Heydrich—Administrative defects in the Abwehr—Canaris's dossier goes to Himmler—His campaign against Canaris—The Admiral's arrest ordered—He declines an opportunity for suicide—Our last meeting

BY THE end of February 1942 the position of Admiral Canaris was no longer secure. His friends and subordinates may not have been aware of it, but I knew that Hitler was seriously considering getting rid of him. His downfall was precipitated by an incident that assumed considerable importance in the battle of wits between technicians that was joined throughout the war.

Since the middle of 1941 we had put into operation a new device for defence against enemy aircraft. It had been developed with great skill by the technical department of the Luftwaffe and was being employed so extensively that our anti-aircraft defences were able to determine exactly the position and distance of all approaching enemy aircraft. This device, together with our highly developed automatic aiming devices, enabled us to inflict heavy casualties on the enemy, as all the main airbases of northern and western Europe were covered by it.

One of the most important installations from which it was operated was at Cap d'Antifer, near Le Havre. At midnight on February 27, 1942 a British Commando unit made a surprise raid on the installation. They succeeded in removing important parts of it and took photographs of other parts that could not be removed. After massacring the German garrison, they were able to withdraw with their booty. It can well be imagined that this daring and successful stratagem aroused no great enthusiasm in Hitler's headquarters. He was in a blind fury, and this time his

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was justified, but the shortcomings were especially in the case of the installation.

After brooding a while, Himmler and I demanded that the western Powers should be informed about the information on this.

The technical personnel were based on their own equipment. He demanded that

Canaris's organization for him. As usual, Canaris finished his work.

This was the opposite of the attack on Canaris. I said that at my Abwehr, the I said that at my additional responsibility for their decision not to take the time being.

Later on, when I admitted that my reluctance to do so was a difference of two Canaris, but the Fuel and organization of a

the fact that I could not do so for me was almost more than I could bear. I said that of an

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Kube changed. When he found out that among the German Jews who had been deported into his province were decorated veterans of the World War, his hatred for the SS suddenly found no limit. He interfered everywhere with the executions, warned Jews to escape, confronted SS commanders and men with threats and even with a drawn pistol.³⁸ His deputy, a man named Karl, reported to him about the "disgusting, indescribably brutal treatment given to the area's Jews by German police and Lithuanian auxiliary police."³⁹ Kube became even more disruptive.

His activities were answered by a memorandum from the area's SD commander, SS Lieutenant Colonel Eduard Strauch. Excerpts from his report, which he filed and also forwarded to Heydrich, said, "The Gauleiter wished to see me at once. He said that our behavior and actions were abhorrent to any German and not worthy of the Germany of Kant and Goethe." He went on, "My men have been accused of barbarism and sadism, though we were merely doing our duty. Even the removal of the gold teeth and fillings of Jews selected for special treatment was carried out in an orderly manner by medical specialists. It seemed incomprehensible to me that two Germans could have disagreements over a few Jews . . . [Kube] said that my men got their thrills from executions (*aufgeilen*), which I denied strenuously. I emphasized that I found it regrettable that, after doing sordid work, we are also to have offal poured on us. That finished our conversation."⁴⁰

The following year Kube was murdered by anti-German partisans, blown up by a bomb set under his bed by his chambermaid. His death brought little unhappiness in the headquarters of the SD and Gestapo in the Prinz Albrecht Strasse in Berlin.

At about the same time, Heydrich, appointed deputy governor general of the former Czechoslovakia, was assassinated in Prague by two British-trained Czech secret agents, on May 27, 1942. He was succeeded as head of all German police by the tall, pockmarked, scarred Ernst Kaltenbrunner; though Kaltenbrunner had neither the talent for evil nor the ice-cold blood of his predecessor, his rule was marked by even more murders.

Although the secrecy about the death camps imposed by the SS was stringent, rumors surfaced everywhere. Among the letters to his wife from Count Helmuth James von Moltke, an official at Armed Forces Headquarters in Berlin and a leader of the resistance, is this one of October 10, 1942: "Yesterday's lunch was interesting because the man I ate with had just come from the 'Government' and gave an authentic report on the 'SS blast furnace.' Until now, I had not believed

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suffering the effects of syphilis and would in time become paralyzed. One day Himmler asked Felix Kersten, his medical practitioner and masseur, whether the Führer, who was also a patient of Kersten's, was mentally ill. Kersten said Hitler belonged in a hospital for mental diseases, not in the Chancellery. Kersten was one of the men, like Kube, who discovered the need to save Germany by saving the Jews. He frequently made attempts to get life-saving information or to make Himmler change some harsh measure.

The most pathetic of these attempts was a letter directed to "the Führer of the Greater German Reich," from Dr. Wilhelm Hagen, a member of the Tuberculosis Commission of the German Occupational Government in Warsaw.⁴² The letter questioned the wisdom and morality in the name of "tubercular treatment" of expelling 200,000 Poles and treating 70,000 others "like the Jews" by killing them. All this was to make room for German "defense farmers." In the thousand-word letter, he outlined the consequences of these actions from a military, diplomatic, political, and moral standpoint. He put his request for kindness and decency "trustingly into the hands of you, my Führer" and ended with *Heil Hitler!* The letter was dated December 7, 1942.

Dr. Hagen's letter was followed by a directive, issued by the head of the Reichs Health Organization, addressed to an aide of Heinrich Himmler's, marked Secret, dated March 3, 1943.

"Reference to your letter of 29.3.43, Dr. Hagen has been removed from any activities licensed by the Reichs Health Organization and has been rebuked sharply." It pointed out that Dr. Hagen had stated he was urged to write his letter at the suggestion of SA Brigadier Weber, an old comrade of the Führer's. Hagen was "an idealist who has made a fool of himself." It was suggested that he "continue to practice emergency medicine back in Germany to preserve his medical knowledge for the good of the community."

More than a year had passed since the collapse of France and the *sauve-qui-peut* rout of Britain's weaponless soldiers at Dunkirk. By 1942 Britain was supposed to have been a conquered nation; Russia was to have been a battered bear. Rommel was supposed to have reached Cairo, with the Suez Canal in the Wehrmacht's hands. Spain was to have been a firm ally, putting the Mediterranean under Hitler's control. Göring's Luftwaffe, after smashing Britain's military and emotional defenses, was to have administered a similar fate to Russia. Japan would own the Orient and Germany the Occident.

Instead, Britain was stubbornly unbeatable. Rommel, held at bay,

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was in danger of being chased back to Libya. In Russia, Germany was trying one last time to break through before winter. The United States was gaining in its battle against Japan, and a vast flow of American men and matériel was on its way to Britain. Supplies were also going to Russia, and the U-boats could not stop them. And Mussolini? The Duce was not even worthy of mention.

The only progress Hitler could measure visibly was in his fight against the Jews and the Poles, against the mentally ill and the incurable.

No wonder that a minor, probing attack on the French coast was publicized as a major battle. On August 19, 1942, a small force of Canadian and British commandos landed at Dieppe and did some damage before being killed or captured. It was a strange action, hard to explain in retrospect, since it had few chances of success. The rationale ranged from "morale" to "rehearsal," from "deception" to "plain miscalculation."

In North Africa Rommel failed to push through El Alamein to Cairo. On November 2, 1942, a new British general, Bernard Montgomery, took back El Alamein, and thereafter most of Rommel's North African campaign unraveled fast. He lost almost all the ground he had gained. The British took thirty thousand prisoners and Tobruk, which Rommel had seized earlier in the year. The Allied landings in Morocco, Operation Torch, put the Afrika Korps wholly on the defensive.

Hitler ordered all Vichy France occupied on November 11 to counter the new threat from North Africa. That was the end of collaborationist France under Pétain. Three days earlier Hitler had inquired whether the French were willing to fight on Germany's side against Britain and America, but he had received no assurances, even though he had promised the French an alliance "through thick and thin." Supposedly, on November 11 Pétain secretly instructed Admiral Jean Darlan in North Africa to make peace with the Allies and to fight once more against the Axis. That also failed, and Darlan was relieved on December 16 and then assassinated by a de Gaulle agent, Bonnierd la Chapelle, a student.

Now Abetz in Paris was even more helpless than before. All of France was run by the military, the Nazi Party, and their police. Von Ribbentrop's influence was minimal.

Rommel fell ill on September 22, 1942, and went on convalescent leave to Germany and Austria.⁴⁵ The remainder of the Afrika Korps, under Hans Jürgen von Arnim, had no future. Nevertheless Abetz sent

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a senior official, Rudolf Rahn, to represent the ministry at von Arnim's headquarters in Tunisia.

In November, after the occupation of Vichy France, Abetz was recalled by von Ribbentrop. It was a strange recall, because Abetz had never been accredited as ambassador to France. There was never a peace treaty between Germany and France.⁴⁶ Abetz knew he was in disfavor, although he did not understand why. He saw neither Hitler nor von Ribbentrop for a full year. He was consulted only once, on the formation of a French volunteer Waffen SS unit called Charlemagne. In his memoirs, Abetz assumed that he was considered "too francophile" and that his constant warnings about the loss of the French fleet and the loss of the French North African colonies were a thorn in the side of von Ribbentrop, particularly now that they had turned out to be correct. The scuttling of the French fleet at Toulon on November 27 had ensured that the French would not join the Axis.

However, this was the smallest of Adolf Hitler's many problems. His offensive launched toward Stalingrad in August had stalled. The entire German 6th Army, under the newly promoted Marshal Friedrich Paulus, was now encircled by the Soviets and anxiously waiting for the Führer's permission to break out. From his headquarters, Hitler gave Paulus his answer: No retreat. But there was no way the frozen German soldier, the *Landser*, short of ammunition and food, could hold out. Göring's promise to supply the troops by air was empty. Hitler should have sensed that Mars had turned his face from him. And Joachim von Ribbentrop?

He spent as much time as he could near his Führer, mostly in East Prussia. As 1942 went on, his hatred of those "rigid creatures" of the Foreign Ministry became more profound. Martin Luther, his "spy," his Wannsee deputy, now became his watchdog in the Wilhelmstrasse. At the ministry, Luther had to concern himself more with negative attitudes than with the danger of actual rebellion. No professional member of a senior German ministry could convince himself that the time for active revolt had come. The staff was held together by the decency and steadfastness of State Secretary Ernst von Weizsäcker, who was running the ministry for its usually absent minister.

The state secretary's dilemma was insurmountable. He hated his chief, von Ribbentrop, as well as Adolf Hitler, von Ribbentrop's chief. He could not stomach the foreign minister's arrogant dilettantism, lack of diplomatic skills, and his absence of courage in dealing with Hitler. Von Weizsäcker's immediate concern was for the men working in the ministry, most of whom he considered honorable. He also

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service for postwar extent of the world's colonel in *The Bridge* his men's work, even if her duties, he could not rent, often the outcome of the SD. Luther's allocation was maintained to "help [him] preserve er, like the Kordt broth- ntrop had brought into nature," but by 1942 he the confidence of anti- matter how strenuously ntrop and to block the Deutschland, he himself s initials on deportation would haunt him to his

icide. It is unlikely that in any other patriot, but "helpless" ministry office of his misjudgment. It man officialdom: Obey! self that each and every responsible for the fate of his precarious perch.

Germany's diplomatic Paul Schmidt, who had ministry for over twenty the bombing of his native announcement in the fall heavy heart. Now, after the more to look my English suffering in the bombings inflicted on Britain: "They d to take account of the cities had caused in the be sanitized or erased by iginal bombings of War- air own cruel reward, but

he did not see that there could never be atonement for the millions killed by the Einsatzgruppen and their foreign helpers and the camps.

Joachim von Ribbentrop's place at the end of 1942 was precarious. His Führer was stumbling and demanded more blind loyalty than ever, but the Führer no longer required the advice of his expert on foreign policy. That need had long passed. To preserve his ministry in Berlin, von Ribbentrop had to depend on von Weizsäcker, whom he disliked but could trust, and on Martin Luther, whom he neither liked nor trusted. Von Ribbentrop's eyes were firmly closed against the future. Personally, he must have worried about his son Rudolf in the Waffen SS. Annelies and Joachim von Ribbentrop were devoted to their firstborn.

Following the Allied landings in North Africa, Hitler had called a meeting in Munich at the old "Chamberlain" hall with von Ribbentrop, Laval, and Ciano. The subject was the occupation of the Vichy government area to achieve "combined vigilance against attack." The actual proclamation spoke about the French Army and the German Wehrmacht cooperating to protect the French frontier and "to shield the African possessions from criminal attacks." The occupation of Corsica and Tunisia was also announced. Laval, fearful, tried to persuade Hitler to avoid the occupation of Vichy France. He failed and soon left the meeting. Ciano looked bored, and von Ribbentrop kept quiet.⁴⁸

When Göring tried separately to persuade French General Alphonse Juin to help to hold Rommel's defensive line against the British, Juin said, "I cannot expect my officers to do that while there are still French prisoners of war in Germany." Late in December 1942, there was another conference in the gloomy Wolfsschanze in East Prussia. Göring again was present. Ciano brought a message from Mussolini: "Stop all offensive operations in Russia. Hold the line with fewer men and assign troops to North Africa." Hitler merely accused the Italian troops of being the weak link that had caused the disaster at Stalingrad, and Laval was assailed with a catalogue of French sins. There were no recorded comments either from Göring or from von Ribbentrop. Such silences became usual.

As part of the program to help the SD in its evacuations for the Final Solution, Dr. Werner Best, an SD general of proven brutality, was dispatched as governor general to stubborn little Denmark. Best became one of the most controversial figures of the war. He was among the original organizers, with Heydrich, of the Gestapo and SD and had then become part of the Foreign Ministry under von Ribben-

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trop. In Denmark, Best decided to turn a blind eye to the successful efforts of the Danish resistance to smuggle Denmark's Jews to safety in neutral Sweden. Because he was known for his brutality to members of the Resistance in France, it is difficult to understand his decision to allow the Danes to save their Jews. Once word got back to Berlin, he was severely criticized but was allowed to remain in office. As a result of the work and the courage of the Danish resistance, 7906 Danish Jews and part Jews, or people married to Jews, were saved. Four hundred and ninety-two were sent to Theresienstadt; 423 survived.

A hundred and thirteen Danes were executed under Best, though not in connection with the save-the-Jews action. (As in all such events, nothing is pure or clear. Some Danes even confessed to being anti-Semitic. A well-known Danish surgeon once told the author, "We saved the Jews because they were *our* Jews. No one could tell us what to do with *our* Jews. Disliking them was *our* business, not theirs.")

After Best ignored further orders to institute severe reprisals against mounting Danish resistance, he was summoned to Berlin by von Ribbentrop. Hitler, in a screaming fit, refused all reasonable explanations about the ineffectiveness of reprisal measures in stubborn Denmark. "I will not listen!" Hitler howled.⁴⁹ A few hours later von Ribbentrop told Best, "Do what you think is right and sensible, but the Führer's orders must be carried out."

Probably the document that most closely described the interlocking machinery of the Foreign Ministry as a newly adopted instrument of mass deportation (and thereby murder) is the following, issued before the Danish evacuation of the Danish Jews:

U. St.S.—D.—Nr. 6862

Berlin 24 Sept. 1942

(Under State Secretary — Dept. D. No. 6862)

SECRET

Memorandum

The Foreign Minister instructed me on the telephone today to expedite the evacuation of Jews from the various countries of Europe, because it is certain that Jews everywhere are maligning us and must be held responsible for acts of sabotage and assassination. After informing me about the current Jewish evacuations from Slovakia, Croatia, Romania, and the occupied territories, the minister ordered me to approach the Bulgarian, Hungarian, and Danish governments to inform them that they are to initiate the evacuations from their countries.

Regarding the Jewish question in Italy, the Foreign Minister has decided to reserve decision. This subject is to be discussed personally between the Führer and the Duce or between the minister and Count Ciano.

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fit into the whole National Socialist picture," he explained to Schacht.²⁴⁴ He thereupon extended to the Reich proper a procedure developed in Austria by Reinhard Heydrich since August 1938 for despoiling and expelling Jews.²⁴⁵ He had rationalized this "Operation Reinhard" (as it was nicknamed) in telling a visiting South African on 24 November 1938 that he was "exporting anti-Semitism."²⁴⁶ He assured this same visitor that "the problem would be solved in the near future" and that "the Jews would one day disappear from Europe."²⁴⁷ How can he have meant that solution and disappearance if, as he claimed, the Jews would not leave voluntarily and if, as he boasted, he was making them undesirable everywhere? Alfred Rosenberg provided an answer five days before Schacht's dismissal: that the goal was a Jewish reservation outside Europe.²⁴⁸ Five days after Schacht's dismissal a Foreign Office circular stated that the point of the Reich's spoliations and expulsions was to force the Jewish issue toward that very goal.²⁴⁹ In between, Hitler himself brought up the Jewish reservation as he was telling the Czech foreign minister that in Germany "the Jews were being destroyed. The Jews had not made the ninth of November for nothing, this day would be avenged."²⁵⁰

The Jewish reservation under international administration—later the SS-run Jewish penal colony—was mere masking for Hitler's final aim.²⁵¹ He proclaimed this aim on 30 January 1939, the sixth anniversary of his accession, after sneering at the crocodile tears shed for Germany's Jews from behind the closed borders of the democracies. "Should international finance Jewry inside and outside Europe succeed in plunging the nations into a world war again," he declared, "the consequence will be, not the Bolshevization of the earth and therewith the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe."²⁵² He recalled this "prophecy" insistently before, during, and after its near fulfillment. On the next-to-last occasion he said: "I played fair with the Jews. I gave them a final warning before the war." And on the last: "I left no one in doubt that this time ... the real culprit would ... have to expiate his guilt."⁽²⁵³⁾ The prophecy connects back to a warning he issued while establishing his dictatorship, "Jewry must recognize that a Jewish war against Germany strikes

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the rooting out of Jewry itself was for later. This rescheduling was politic. Jewry having been no part of the German war trauma, he could relate the two for few Germans beneath the level of talk.⁴⁰ In effect he stopped trying after 1928 as his political fortunes mounted. Instead, the ending of divisions among Germans became his cover theme both for (his) removing the divisive Jew and for (their) rallying to conquer living space.⁴¹ "Our fight is . . . for the German person, whom we want to and are going to join back into an indissoluble community of fate";⁴² here was, capsulated, Hitler's charged summons to mass folly that proved irresistible.

The killing of Europe's Jews was rescheduled to begin with the invasion of Soviet Russia.⁴³ This synchronization was prefigured when Hitler predated the order for the Euthanasia program, forerunner of the Final Solution, to the start of the invasion of Poland, forerunner of Barbarossa.⁴⁴ It was postfigured repeatedly as, beginning in 1942, Hitler repeatedly recalled his grim prophesy of death to Europe's Jews and each time postdated it to the start of the Polish war.⁴⁵ The Polish war brought a practical end of the expulsion of Jews from Hitler's area of control,⁴⁶ his order for transporting Jews instead to the future killing centers,⁴⁷ and special directives from him for SS atrocities behind the battle lines.⁴⁸ This was not yet his full racial-ideological extermination program, but neither was that war yet his long-heralded one for living space. Barbarossa first made his prophecy practicable by creating the requisite climate of war to the death and putting virtually all of Europe within his grasp. He assigned the first full-scale Jewish exterminations, under the label "special tasks," to SS commandos operating in a reserved zone behind the battle lines.⁴⁹ This provision of Barbarossa got by his military commanders unexamined as he hit them on their side with orders to kill captured Communist officials in an ideological war of annihilation.⁵⁰ The racial war half hid behind the ideological war in these preliminaries to Barbarossa as in his rhetoric of the early 1930s. Occasionally he reverted to this rhetoric after Barbarossa was launched, as when in 1944 he told his ear doctor, that in

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June 1941 he "took up the fight against the Moloch Bolshevism."⁵¹ But he betrayed his lesser interest in killing Communists than Jews by remarks of October 1942 noted by an army adjutant: "He knows all right that the orders issued to the army such as the 'Commissar' Order (June 1941) have been carried out only haltingly if at all. . . . If he didn't have his SS, just think of all that would be left undone."⁵² The army invading the USSR shielded the killing operation behind the lines:⁵³ here the land grab fronted for the Jew kill as in his rhetoric of the late 1920s, but literally now. Goebbels, in his speech of 18 February 1943 calling for total war, depicted this arrangement in reverse: "Behind the Soviet divisions charging ahead we already see the Jewish liquidation commandos."⁵⁴ The battle also screened the killings of Jews in that they could be assimilated to executions of partisans.⁵⁵ And it obliged the military to look the other way.

The battle shielded those killings no less when they were displaced to the death camps in 1942. The preparatory deportations were presented to the army as serving the military interest. Typically Hitler told the German military attaché in Budapest in October 1942: "All Jews must be removed from the [Czech] Protectorate This is unfeasible just now only because of the military's big need for transportation. At the same time as the Jews from the Protectorate, all Jews are to disappear from Berlin and Vienna. The Jews everywhere are the conductor that conveys all the enemy's news with the speed of wind to the farthest reaches of the population."⁵⁶ But by the winter of 1943-1944 Himmler was haranguing the generals and admirals as well as the high officials of state and Party on the overriding necessity for exterminating Jewry down to the last child.⁵⁷ On one such occasion Himmler paid special tribute to armaments minister Albert Speer for cooperating in this higher interest despite the critical need for the Jewish laborers left in war industries.⁵⁸ The death mills drained off other vital resources besides Jewish labor, primarily transportation, from the war effort and thereby quickened the catastrophe that Hitler had long since foreseen at the end of his own traumatic course and Germany's.⁵⁹

So Hitler's expansionism emerged as instrumental to his anti-

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April 26, 1942: By special act of the Reichstag, Hitler invested with unlimited judicial powers, making him supreme judge of the Reich with no limitations or controls whatsoever.

June 10, 1942: Destruction of the Czech village of Lidice, where, without knowledge of the population, Heydrich's assassins had temporarily hidden.⁵

August 23, 1942: Orders to Field Marshal von Manstein: "Phase 1: Cut off Leningrad and seek contact with the Finns. Phase 2: Occupy Leningrad and level it to the ground."

In order to appreciate the *Table Conversations* as an historical document, one must consider the character the war assumed as these monologues of hubris were being transcribed. After the winter of 1941-42, the condition of the army in the East was as follows:

By April 30, 1942, the casualty total had risen to 1,167,835; one out of three men who had marched on June 22, 1941, when Germany attacked the Soviet Union, had fallen. Of 162 infantry divisions on the Eastern Front, eight were fully combat-ready and three more would be after a rest pause. Forty-seven divisions were ready for limited offensive operations and seventy-three could be used for defensive operations, while twenty-nine were only conditionally suitable for defensive action. Two divisions, at least for the time being, were useless. On April 4, 1942, the component units of Army Group South were up to about 50 per cent of their full fighting strength, but only because, in view of their role in the coming campaign, they had been given priority in the assignment of replacements. Army Groups Center and North had only about 35 per cent of the infantry fighting strength they had had in mid-1941. The number of combat-ready aircraft had declined to somewhere between 50 and 60 per cent of the strength of May 1, 1941. There were good prospects for improvement in all these areas through the return of men who were still convalescing, new recruits, and the exploitation of the previously untapped reservoir of those who had just turned nineteen. Nevertheless, the overall picture was very

⁵Reinhard Heydrich, one of Heinrich Himmler's closest associates, who had assumed command in Prague in September 1941, was fatally wounded by assassins on May 26, 1942. In retaliation the Germans leveled the village of Lidice near Prague and summarily executed all its male inhabitants.—ED.

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The Anatomy of a Dictator 27 A

By the end of 1942, reverses in North Africa, Allied landings in Algeria and Morocco, and the imminent encirclement of Stalingrad clearly showed a deteriorating situation on all fronts. Then "... it was clear not only to the responsible soldiers but to Hitler himself," Jodl acknowledged in his Nuremburg cell, "that the god of war had now turned from Germany and gone over to the other camp."⁸ It all added up to this: At the very time the *Table Conversations* were being recorded and Hitler was describing to his listeners what the world would look like after Germany's victory, he knew very well that all his plans were unattainable. Yet he admitted this to no one, not even the narrow circle of "comrades" who were privileged to join him at meals and were pledged to absolute discretion.

If we find no reference to these grim facts in the *Table Conversations*, it is not because they have been omitted or suppressed, but

and himself, that when the catastrophe of the winter of 1941-1942 occurred, when the German armies were stopped before Moscow, "victory could no longer be achieved. The point of culmination had been passed, and the new and initially successful attempt to turn the hand of fate in the summer of 1942 also failed."

⁸On reading this passage in the *War Diary*, revealing that Hitler as early as 1942 had realized the war could not be won, Hans Kehrl, formerly with the Ministry of Armaments and War Production, wrote to me in June 1963: "At that time (i.e., fall 1943) I participated in a conference with Hitler which had been arranged by [Armaments Minister Albert] Speer. In addition to Speer there were, to mention only the most important, [Coal Commissar] Paul Pleiger, leaders of the iron and steel industry, and (I do not remember exactly) [Economics Minister Walter] Funk or General von Hanneken.

"Briefly, it was a matter of convincing the Führer that there was not enough steel for the armaments program, but that steel production could be expanded if sufficient coal and coke were made available. The question, in other words, was where the buck was going to be passed next.

"The discussion was carried on primarily by Hitler and Pleiger. Hitler, incidentally, was businesslike and well informed. He knew the production figures per man-day from England, America, France, and so on. Pleiger conceded that a limited increase in output would be possible if enough Russian prisoners of war were made available, but even so the desired production figures could not be reached. To my boundless surprise, Hitler in the course of the conversation quite dryly said, 'Pleiger, if we cannot produce more coal and more steel, the war is lost.' I very clearly remember these words which Hitler spoke in the presence of a group which was by no means small or particularly intimate."

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grind to a halt. Hitler led a discussion of the plans for an Olympic stadium with the observation that "[we Germans must learn] to overcome our halfheartedness and always strive for the total solution with a view to achieving the greatest possible success." This was something, he continued, which Wallenstein had grasped, but not Hjalmar Schacht, who created one problem after another when it came to raising funds for rearmament. "Especially in this war we must bear in mind constantly that in case of defeat we're done for. No matter how ruthlessly, we've got to put everything we have on the line for the sake of ultimate victory."

"One way or another" (*so oder so*) was an expression Hitler often used. During the period of his triumphs this had meant that if the enemy did not cooperate freely, his resistance would be broken by force. From 1942 on it came to mean that if the first try was not successful, then the second or the third would have to be—but there would be no capitulation, no surrender! On January 10, 1943, as the fate of Stalingrad was already becoming clear, Hitler explained to the Rumanian dictator Marshal Antonescu that in contrast to the First World War, the issue was now one of "existence or nonexistence." In the event the "Anglo-Saxons" (as he called the English and Americans) prevailed, they would be victors in a limited sense only, since they would be confronted with the power of Soviet Russia. "The result would be a mighty Bolshevik empire with a powerful industrial plant, boundless raw material resources, and vast manpower reserves, which would pursue the old expansionist goals of Russia with these masses and energy. . . ." He went on to emphasize that with Germany and her allies forced to fight under such circumstances, it was "not a war over the possession of territories, but a struggle for existence." During the subsequent visit of Marshal Antonescu on April 12, 1943, Hitler expressed the matter even more clearly, saying that he was "firmly convinced that there were only two possible outcomes of the present war: either a clear victory or absolute annihilation." Hitler's model became Frederick the Great, who had also been saved from an absolutely hopeless situation because he had held on. That had to be the task of the German "Leader" now, no matter how anxiously the hearts of his followers might quake. Hitler held to this view with grisly pertinacity to the very end. At the high point of the crisis of 1944 on the Western

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his attention sharpened, and he asked about the words. I produced the text I had in my pocket. He read it and said nothing. My opinion was that the songs were the natural response to a grim situation. Hitler, however, decided at once that some traitor was trying to undermine morale. He thought my story would enable him to track down this "oppositionist." Not until after the war did I learn that he had ordered a court-martial of the officer responsible for printing the songs.

This episode was characteristic of his perpetual suspiciousness. He closed his mind against the truth, but thought he could draw important conclusions from such random observations. Consequently he was always querying subordinates, even though they could not possibly have a view of the whole. Such distrust, usually without basis, had become a strong component in Hitler's character. It caused him to become obsessed with trivialities. Undoubtedly it was also to blame for his isolation from the events and the mood at the front; for his entourage tried as far as possible to fend off any informants who might stir up his suspicions that all was not well with the army in the east.

When I finally left Hitler at three o'clock in the morning, I sent word that I would not be flying with Dr. Todt. The plane was to start five hours later, I was worn out and wanted only to have a decent sleep. In my small bedroom I considered—who in Hitler's entourage did not do so after a two-hour conversation with him?—what impression I had probably left with him. I was content, my confidence restored that we would be able to carry out our building projects, a matter I had begun to doubt in view of the military situation. That night our dreams were transformed into realities; we had once again worked ourselves up to a hallucinatory optimism.

Next morning, the shrill clang of the telephone startled me out of a deep sleep. Dr. Brandt reported excitedly: "Dr. Todt's plane has just crashed, and he has been killed."

From that moment on my whole world was changed.

My relationship to Dr. Todt had become perceptibly closer in recent years. With his death I felt that I had lost an older, prudent colleague. We had much in common. Both of us came from prosperous, upper-middle-class circumstances; both of us were Badeners and had

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Standing, earnest and formal, he received my condolences, replied very briefly, then said without more ado: "Herr Speer, I appoint you the successor to Minister Todt in all his capacities."

I was thunderstruck. He was already shaking hands with me and on the point of dismissing me. But I thought he had expressed himself imprecisely and therefore replied that I would try my best to be an adequate replacement for Dr. Todt in his construction assignments. "No, in all his capacities, including that of Minister of Armaments," Hitler corrected me.

"But I don't know anything about . . ." I protested.

"I have confidence in you. I know you will manage it," Hitler cut me off. "Besides, I have no one else. Get in touch with the Ministry at once and take over!"

"Then, *mein Führer*, you must put that as a command, for I cannot vouch for my ability to master this assignment."

Tersely, Hitler issued the command. I received it in silence.

Without a personal word, such as had been the usual thing between us, Hitler turned to other business. I took my leave, having experienced a first sample of our new relationship. Hitherto, Hitler had displayed a kind of fellowship toward me as an architect. Now a new phase was perceptibly beginning. From the first moment on he was establishing the aloofness of an official relationship to a minister who was his subordinate.

As I turned to the door, Schaub entered. "The Reich Marshal is here and urgently wishes to speak to you, *mein Führer*. He has no appointment."

Hitler looked sulky and displeased. "Send him in." He turned to me. "Stay here a moment longer."

Goering bustled in and after a few words of condolence stated his mind: "Best if I take over Dr. Todt's assignments within the framework of the Four-Year Plan. This would avoid the frictions and difficulties we had in the past as a result of overlapping responsibilities."

Goering had presumably come in his special train from his hunting lodge in Rominten, about sixty miles from Hitler's headquarters. Since the accident had taken place at half past nine he must have wasted no time at all.

Hitler ignored Goering's proposal. "I have already appointed Todt's successor. Reich Minister Speer here has assumed all of Dr. Todt's offices as of this moment."

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The statement was so unequivocal that it excluded all possible argument. Goering seemed stunned and alarmed. But within a few seconds he recovered his composure. Coldly and ill-humoredly, he made no comment on Hitler's announcement. Instead he said: "I hope you will understand, *mein Führer*, if I do not attend Dr. Todt's funeral. You know what battles I had with him. It would hardly do for me to be present."

I no longer remember precisely what Hitler replied, since all this washing of dirty linen was naturally somewhat of a shock to me at this early moment in my new ministerial career. But I recall that Goering finally consented to come to the funeral, so that his disagreements with Todt would not become public knowledge. Given the importance assigned to such ceremonies by the system, it would have caused quite a stir if the second man in the state was absent from a formal act of state in honor of a dead cabinet minister.

There could be no doubt that Goering had tried to win his point by a surprise assault. I even surmised that Hitler had expected such a maneuver, and that this was the reason for the speed of my appointment.

As Minister of Armaments, Dr. Todt could carry out his assignment from Hitler only by issuing direct orders to industry. Goering, on the other hand, as Commissioner of the Four-Year Plan, felt responsible for running the entire war economy. He and his apparatus were therefore pitted against Todt's activities. In the middle of January 1942, about two weeks before his death, Todt had taken part in a conference on production matters. In the course of it Goering had so berated him that Todt informed Funk on the same afternoon that he would have to quit. On such occasions it worked to Todt's disadvantage that he wore the uniform of a brigadier general of the air force. This meant that in spite of his ministerial office he ranked as Goering's subordinate in the military hierarchy.

After this little episode one thing was clear to me: Goering would not be my ally, but Hitler seemed prepared to back me if I should encounter difficulties with the Reich Marshal.

At first Hitler seemed to treat Todt's death with the stoic calm of a man who must reckon with such incidents as part of the general picture. Without citing any evidence, he expressed the suspicion, during the first few days, that foul play might have been involved and that he was going to have the secret service look into the matter. This

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were all supposed to settle their interrelationships among themselves, but I took the liberty of intervening in important questions or whenever differences of opinion arose.

Our method of work was just as unusual as this form of organization. The old-line officials of the government bureaucracy spoke disdainfully of a "dynamic Ministry" or a "Ministry without an organization plan" and a "Ministry without officials." It was said that I applied rough-and-ready or "American" methods. My comment, "If jurisdictions are sharply separated, we are actually encouraging a limited point of view,"⁸ was prompted by rebellion against the caste mentality of the system, but also bore some resemblance to Hitler's notions of improvised government by an impulsive genius.

Another principle of mine also gave offense. This had to do with personnel policy. As soon as I assumed my post I gave instructions, as the Fuehrer's Minutes of February 19, 1942, record, that the leading men in important departments who were "over fifty-five years old must be assigned a deputy who is no older than forty."

Whenever I explained my organizational plans to Hitler, he showed a striking lack of interest. I had the impression that he did not like to deal with these questions; indeed, in certain realms he was altogether incapable of distinguishing the important from the unimportant. He also did not like establishing clear lines of jurisdiction. Sometimes he deliberately assigned bureaus or individuals the same or similar tasks. "That way," he used to say, "the stronger one does the job."

Within half a year after my taking office we had significantly increased production in all the areas within our scope. Production in August 1942, according to the *Index Figures for German Armaments End-Products*, as compared with the February production, had in-

was responsible for preserving the regular procedures of government administration.

I brought the head of the Planning Department, Willy Liebel, from Nuremberg, where he had been mayor. The director of the Technical Department, Karl Saur, had risen from the intermediate ranks of party functionaries, after previously occupying a subordinate position in industry. The head of the Supply Department, Dr. Walter Schieber, was a chemist by profession; he was typical of the older party member in the SS and party who had had previous experience as specialists. Xaver Dorsch, my deputy in the Todt Organization, was our oldest party member. The head of the department responsible for consumer goods production, Seebauer, had also joined the party long before 1933.

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billions marks.* For he always wanted to have everything at once and reasoned as follows: "Perhaps the war with Russia will soon be ended. But then I have more far-reaching plans, and for them I need more synthetic fuel than before. We must go on with the new factories, even though they may not be finished for years." A year later, on March 2, 1943, I again had to remonstrate that there was no point to "building factories which are intended to serve great future programs and will not begin to produce until after January 1, 1945."⁷ Hitler's wrong-headed decision of the spring of 1942 was still a drag upon our armaments production in September 1944, in a military situation that had meanwhile become catastrophic.

Despite Hitler's countermanding of my plan, it had nevertheless freed several hundred thousand construction workers, who could have been transferred to armaments production. But then a new, unexpected trouble arose: the head of the "Business Department for Labor Assignment within the Four-Year Plan," Ministerial Director Dr. Mansfeld, told me frankly that he lacked authority to transfer the released construction workers from one district to another over the objections of the Gauleiters.⁸ And in fact the Gauleiters, for all their rivalries and intrigues, closed ranks whenever any of their privileges were threatened. I realized that in spite of my strong position I could never deal with them alone. I needed someone from their number to act as my ally. I would also need special powers from Hitler.

The man I had in mind was my old friend Karl Hanke, longtime state secretary under Goebbels, who since January 1941 had been Gauleiter of Lower Silesia. Hitler proved willing to nominate a commissioner from among the Gauleiters who would be assigned to me. But Bormann was quick to parry. For Hanke was considered one of my adherents. His appointment would have meant not only a rein-

* This construction project tied up high-grade steel and many specialists. I opposed Hitler's view, arguing that "it is better to get one hydrogenation plant built in a few months than to build several over a period three times as long employing a third of the necessary construction workers. The plant that is built quickly by concentrating all the labor on the one project will provide fuel for many months to come, whereas if the usual practice is followed, the first deliveries of additional fuel will not be ready until a much later date." (Speech, April 18, 1942.)

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I had come home on an empty stomach, for visitors in Karin hall were seldom offered a meal. That was the only concession the Goering household made to the needs of a total war economy.

A week after Ganzenmüller's appointment, at which such heroic words had been spoken on the solution of the transportation crisis, I visited Hitler once more. In keeping with my view that in critical times the leadership must set a good example, I proposed to Hitler that the use of private railroad cars by government and party officials be discontinued for the time being. Naturally, I was not thinking of Hitler himself when I made this suggestion. But Hitler demurred; private cars were a necessity in the east, he said, because of the poor housing conditions. I corrected him: most of the cars were not being used in the east, I said, but inside the Reich. And I presented him with a long list of the prominent users of private cars. But I had no luck.²²

I met regularly for lunch with General Friedrich Fromm in a *chambre séparée* at Horcher's Restaurant. In the course of one of these meetings, at the end of April 1942, he remarked that our only chance of winning the war lay in developing a weapon with totally new effects. He said he had contacts with a group of scientists who were on the track of a weapon which could annihilate whole cities, perhaps throw the island of England out of the fight. Fromm proposed that we pay a joint visit to these men. It seemed to him important, he said, at least to have spoken with them.

Dr. Albert Vögler, head of the largest German steel company and president of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft, also called my attention at this time to the neglected field of nuclear research. He complained of the inadequate support fundamental research was receiving from the Ministry of Education and Science, which naturally did not have much influence during wartime. On May 6, 1942, I discussed this situation with Hitler and proposed that Goering be placed at the head of the Reich Research Council—thus emphasizing its importance.²³ A month later, on June 9, 1942, Goering was appointed to this post.

Around the same time the three military representatives of armaments production, Milch, Fromm, and Witzell, met with me at Harnack House, the Berlin center of the Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft, to be briefed on the subject of German atomic research. Along with scientists whose names I no longer recall, the subsequent Nobel Prize

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take one or two million marks and correspondingly larger quantities of materials. But apparently more could not be utilized for the present,²⁵ and in any case I had been given the impression that the atom bomb could no longer have any bearing on the course of the war.

I was familiar with Hitler's tendency to push fantastic projects by making senseless demands, so that on June 23, 1942, I reported to him only very briefly on the nuclear-fission conference and what we had decided to do.²⁶ Hitler received more detailed and more glowing reports from his photographer, Heinrich Hoffmann, who was friendly with Post Office Minister Ohnesorge. Goebbels, too, may have told him something about it. Ohnesorge was interested in nuclear research and was supporting—like the SS—an independent research apparatus under the direction of Manfred von Ardenne, a young physicist. It is significant that Hitler did not choose the direct route of obtaining information on this matter from responsible people but depended instead on unreliable and incompetent informants to give him a Sunday-supplement account. Here again was proof of his love for amateurishness and his lack of understanding of fundamental scientific research.

Hitler had sometimes spoken to me about the possibility of an atom bomb, but the idea quite obviously strained his intellectual capacity. He was also unable to grasp the revolutionary nature of nuclear physics. In the twenty-two hundred recorded points of my conferences with Hitler, nuclear fission comes up only once, and then is mentioned with extreme brevity. Hitler did sometimes comment on its prospects, but what I told him of my conference with the physicists confirmed his view that there was not much profit in the matter. Actually, Professor Heisenberg had not given any final answer to my question whether a successful nuclear fission could be kept under control with absolute certainty or might continue as a chain reaction. Hitler was plainly not delighted with the possibility that the earth under his rule might be transformed into a glowing star. Occasionally, however, he joked that the scientists in their unworldly urge to lay bare all the secrets under heaven might some day set the globe on fire. But undoubtedly a good deal of time would pass before that came about, Hitler said; he would certainly not live to see it.

I am sure that Hitler would not have hesitated for a moment to

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scientific talent. It would have meant giving up all other projects, such as the development of the rocket weapons. From this point of view, too, Peenemünde was not only our biggest but our most misguided project.*

Our failure to pursue the possibilities of atomic warfare can be partly traced to ideological reasons. Hitler had great respect for Philipp Lenard, the physicist who had received the Nobel Prize in 1920 and was one of the few early adherents of Nazism among the ranks of the scientists. Lenard had instilled the idea in Hitler that the Jews were exerting a seditious influence in their concern with nuclear physics and the relativity theory.** To his table companions Hitler occasionally referred to nuclear physics as "Jewish physics"—citing Lenard as his authority for this. This view was taken up by Rosenberg. It thus becomes clearer why the Minister of Education was not inclined to support nuclear research.

But even if Hitler had not had this prejudice against nuclear research and even if the state of our fundamental research in June 1942 could have freed several billion instead of several million marks for the production of atom bombs, it would have been impossible—given the strain on our economic resources—to have provided the materials, priorities, and technical workers corresponding to such an investment. For it was not only superior productive capacity that allowed the United States to undertake this gigantic project. The increasing air raids had long since created an armaments emergency in Germany which ruled out any such ambitious enterprise. At best, with extreme concentration of all our resources, we could have had a

* From 1937 to 1940 the army spent five hundred and fifty million marks on the development of a large rocket. But success was out of the question, for Hitler's principle of scattering responsibility meant that even scientific research teams were divided and often at odds with one another. According to the *Office Journal*, August 17, 1944, not only the three branches of the armed forces but also other organizations, the SS, the postal system, and such, had separate research facilities. In the United States, on the other hand, all the atomic physicists—to take an example—were in one organization.

** According to L. W. Helwig, *Persönlichkeiten der Gegenwart* (1940), Lenard inveighed against "relativity theories produced by alien minds." In his four-volume work, *Die Deutsche Physik* (1935), Helwig considered physics "cleansed of the outgrowths which the by now well-known findings of race research have shown to be the exclusive products of the Jewish mind and which the German Volk must shun as racially incompatible with itself."

tions showed that during the brief explanation period he could grasp the essentials of complicated subjects. However, there was a disadvantage to this which he was unaware of: He arrived at the core of matters too easily and therefore could not understand them with real thoroughness.

I could never predict what the result of our conferences would be. Sometimes he instantly approved a proposal whose prospects seemed exceedingly slight. Sometimes he obstinately refused to permit certain trivial measures which he himself had demanded only a short time before. Nevertheless, my system of circumventing Hitler's knowledge of detail by having experts confront him with even more detailed knowledge netted me more successes than failures. His other associates observed with astonishment and with some degree of envy that Hitler often changed his mind after hearing our counterproposals and would alter decisions which in the preceding military conferences he had called unalterable.¹

Hitler's technical horizon, however, just like his general ideas, his views on art, and his style of life, was limited by the First World War. His technical interests were narrowly restricted to the traditional weapons of the army and the navy. In these areas he had continued to learn and steadily increased his knowledge, so that he frequently proposed convincing and usable innovations. But he had little feeling for such new developments as, for example, radar, the construction of an atom bomb, jet fighters, and rockets. On his rare flights in the newly developed Condor he showed concern that the mechanism which let down the retracted landing gear might not function. Warily, he declared that he preferred the old Junkers 52 with its rigid landing gear.

Very often, directly after one of these conferences Hitler would lecture his military advisers on the technical knowledge he had just acquired. He loved to present such pieces of information with a casual air, as if the knowledge were his own.

When the Russian T-34 appeared, Hitler was triumphant, for he could then point out that he had earlier demanded the kind of long-barreled gun it had. Even before my appointment as Minister of Armaments, I heard Hitler in the Chancellery garden, after a demonstration of the Panzer IV, inveighing against the obstinacy of the Army Ordnance Office which had turned down his idea for increasing the velocity of the missile by lengthening the barrel. The Ordnance

Office had at the time would overload the tank gun in view. If so major sign would be thrown out

Hitler would always countered opposition. "believe me. Now I am a tank which could of greater speed, Hitler in the range of the guns and had mastered the necessities and missile velocity by the example of warship

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My experts from independent discussions. Our business requirements set by the army the General Staff, or by battle tactics were not conducted by the army in discussions. He was still his arguments just as a special weight.

Since the Tiger had or as a result of Hitler's decision decided to develop a new was to signify greater agility be the same as the Tiger speed. But in the course piling so much armor on reached forty-eight tons,

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Office had at the time presented counterarguments: The long barrel would overload the tank in front, since it was not built with such a gun in view. If so major a change were introduced, the whole design would be thrown out of balance.

Hitler would always bring up this incident whenever his ideas encountered opposition. "I was right at the time, and no one wanted to believe me. Now I am right again!" When the army felt the need for a tank which could outmaneuver the comparatively fast T-34 by greater speed, Hitler insisted that more would be gained by increasing the range of the guns and the weight of the armor. In this field, too, he had mastered the necessary figures and could recite penetration results and missile velocities by heart. He usually defended his theory by the example of warships:

In a naval battle the side having the greater range can open fire at the greater distance. Even if it is only half a mile. If along with this he has stronger armor . . . he must necessarily be superior. What are you after? The faster ship has only one advantage: to utilize its greater speed for retreating. Do you mean to say a ship can possibly overcome heavier armor and superior artillery by greater speed? It's exactly the same for tanks. Your faster tank has to avoid meeting the heavier tank.

My experts from industry were not direct participants in these discussions. Our business was to build the tanks according to the requirements set by the army, whether these were decided by Hitler, by the General Staff, or by the Army Ordnance Office. Questions of battle tactics were not our concern; such discussions were usually conducted by the army officers. In 1942, Hitler still encouraged such discussions. He was still listening quietly to objections and offering his arguments just as quietly. Nevertheless, his arguments carried special weight.

Since the Tiger had originally been designed to weigh fifty tons but as a result of Hitler's demands had gone up to seventy-five tons, we decided to develop a new thirty-ton tank whose very name, Panther, was to signify greater agility. Though light in weight, its motor was to be the same as the Tiger's, which meant it could develop superior speed. But in the course of a year Hitler once again insisted on clapping so much armor on it, as well as larger guns, that it ultimately reached forty-eight tons, the original weight of the Tiger.

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In order to compensate for this strange transformation of a swift Panther into a slow Tiger, we made still another effort to produce a series of small, light, quick-moving tanks.² By way of pleasing and reassuring Hitler, Porsche also undertook to design a superheavy tank which weighed over a hundred tons and hence could be built only in small numbers, one by one. For security purposes this new monster was assigned the code name Mouse. In any case Porsche had personally taken over Hitler's bias for superheaviness and would occasionally bring the Fuehrer reports about parallel developments on the part of the enemy. Once, Hitler sent for General Buhle and demanded: "I have just heard that an enemy tank is coming along with armor far beyond anything we have. Have you any documentation of that? If it is true a new antitank gun must be developed instantly. The force of penetration must . . . the gun must be enlarged, or lengthened—to be brief, we must begin reacting immediately. Instantly."³

Thus, Hitler's decisions led to a multiplicity of parallel projects. They also led to more and more complicated problems of supply. One of his worst failings was that he simply did not understand the necessity for supplying the armies with sufficient spare parts.* General Guderian, the Inspector General of Tank Ordnance, frequently pointed out to me that if we could repair our tanks quickly, thanks to sufficient spare parts, we could have more available for battle, at a fraction of the cost, than by producing new ones. But Hitler insisted on the priority of new production, which would have had to be reduced by 20 percent if we made provision for such repairs.

General Fromm as Chief of the Reserve Army was deeply concerned about this kind of poor planning. I took him with me to see Hitler several times so that he could present the arguments of the military. Fromm knew how to state a problem clearly; he had presence and had diplomatic tact. Sitting there, his sword pressed between his knees, hand on the hilt, he looked charged with energy; and to this day I believe that his great abilities might have prevented

* This disastrous tendency was evident as early as 1942: "Presented the Fuehrer with the monthly list of tank replacement parts and reported that despite the increase in production the demand is so high that to raise the production of spare parts we must decrease the production of new tanks." (*Fuehrerprotokoll*, May 6-7, 1942, Point 38.)

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many a blunder at the Fuehrer's headquarters. After several conferences, in fact, his influence increased. But immediately opposition appeared, both on the part of Keitel, who saw his position threatened, and on the part of Goebbels, who tried to persuade Hitler that Fromm had a dangerous political record. Finally, Hitler clashed with Fromm over a question of reserve supplies. Curtly, he let me know that I was no longer to bring Fromm with me.

Many of my conferences with Hitler were concerned with establishing the armaments programs for the army. Hitler's point of view was: The more I demand, the more I receive. And to my astonishment programs which industrial experts considered impossible to carry out were in the end actually surpassed. Hitler's authority liberated reserves that nobody had taken into his calculations. From 1944 on, however, his programs became totally unrealistic. Our efforts to push these through in the factories were self-defeating.

It often seemed to me that Hitler used these prolonged conferences on armaments and war production as an escape from his military responsibilities. He himself admitted to me that he found in them a relaxation similar to our former conferences on architecture. Even in crisis situations he devoted many hours to such discussions, sometimes refusing to interrupt them even when his field marshals or ministers urgently wanted to speak with him.

Our technical conferences were usually combined with a demonstration of new weapons which took place in a nearby field. A few moments before we would have been sitting intimately with Hitler, but now everybody had to line up in rank and file, Field Marshal Keitel, chief of the OKW (High Command of the Armed Forces), on the right. Obviously, Hitler laid stress on the ceremonial aspect of the occasion, adding a further note of formality by entering his official limousine to cover the few hundred yards to the field. I took my place in the back seat. Hitler would then step out, and Keitel would report the presence of the waiting line of generals and technicians.

This ritual concluded, the group promptly broke up. Hitler looked into details, clambered over the vehicles on portable steps held in readiness for him, and continued his discussions with the specialists. Often Hitler and I would make appreciative remarks about the weapons, such as: "What an elegant barrel," or, "What a fine shape

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this tank has!"—a ludicrous relapse into the terminology of our joint inspections of architectural models.

In the course of one such inspection, Keitel mistook a 7.5 centimeter antitank gun for a light field howitzer. Hitler passed over the mistake at the time but had his joke on our ride back: "Did you hear that? Keitel and the antitank gun? And he's a general of the artillery!"

Another time the air force had lined up on a nearby airfield the multiple variants and types in its production program for Hitler's inspection. Goering had himself reserved the right to explain the planes to Hitler. His staff thereupon provided him with a cram sheet, in the order of the models on display, giving their names, flight characteristics, and other technical data. One type had not been brought up in time, and Goering had not been informed. From that point on he blandly misidentified everything, for he adhered strictly to his list. Hitler instantly perceived the error but gave no sign.

At the end of June 1942 I read in the newspapers, just like everyone else, that a great new offensive in the east had begun. There was a mood of exuberance at headquarters. Every evening Hitler's chief adjutant, Schmuntz, traced the onrush of the troops on a wall map, for the edification of civilians at headquarters. Hitler was triumphant. Once again he had proved that he was right and the generals wrong—for they had advised against an offensive and called for defensive tactics, occasionally straightening out the front. Even General Fromm had brightened up, although at the beginning of the operation he had commented to me that any such offensive was a luxury in the "poor man's" situation we were in.

The left wing east of Kiev grew longer and longer. The troops were approaching Stalingrad. Feats were performed to maintain emergency railroad traffic in the newly won territories and thus keep supplies moving.

Barely three weeks after the beginning of the successful offensive Hitler moved to an advanced headquarters near the Ukrainian city of Vinnitsa. Since Russian air activity was as good as nonexistent and the west this time was too far away, even given Hitler's anxieties, he for once did not demand the building of any special air-raid shelters. Instead of the usual concrete buildings a pleasant-looking cluster of blockhouses scattered about a forest was established.

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time I had to drive around the country. Once I drove to Kiev. Immediately after the October Revolution avant-gardists like Le Corbusier, May, or El Lissitzky had influenced modern Russian architecture. But under Stalin at the end of the twenties it had all swung back to a conservative and classicist style. The conference building in Kiev, for example, could have been designed by a good pupil of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. I toyed with the notion of searching out the architect and employing him in Germany. A classicist stadium in Kiev was adorned with statues of athletes in the fashion of classical antiquity—but touchingly, the figures were clad in bathing suits.

I found one of the most famous churches of Kiev a heap of rubble. A Soviet powder magazine had blown up inside it, I was told. Later, I learned from Goebbels that the church had been blown up deliberately on orders of Erich Koch, Reich Commissioner for the Ukraine; the idea had been to destroy this symbol of Ukrainian national pride. Goebbels told the story with displeasure; he was horrified by the brutal course being pursued in occupied sectors of the Soviet Union. In fact the Ukraine at that time was still so peaceable that I could drive through the extensive forests without an escort. Half a year later, thanks to the twisted policy of the eastern commissioners, the whole area was infested with partisans.

Other drives took me to the industrial center of Dnepropetrovsk. What most impressed me was a university complex under construction. Its facilities went far beyond anything in Germany and left no doubt of the Soviet Union's determination to become a technical power of the first rank. I also visited the power plant of Saporoshe, blown up by the Russians. A large construction crew closed the blast hole in the dam, but they also had to install new turbines. Before retreating, the Russians had thrown the oil switch, interrupting the oiling of their turbines while they were running at full speed. The machines ran hot and finally ground themselves into a useless tangle of parts—a feat which could be accomplished by a single man pulling a lever. The vision of that later gave me many a sleepless hour when I learned of Hitler's intention to make Germany a wasteland.

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Even at the Fuehrer's headquarters, Hitler kept to his habit of taking his meals in the midst of his close associates. But whereas at the Chancellery party uniforms had dominated the scene, he was now surrounded by generals and officers of his staff. In contrast to the

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long table in front of Hitler. The discussion began with the northern part of the eastern theater of war. Every detail of the events of the previous day was entered on the maps, every advance, even patrols—and almost every entry was explained by the Chief of Staff. Bit by bit the maps were pushed farther up the table, so that Hitler always had a comprehensible segment within reading distance. Longer discussion was devoted to the more important events, Hitler noting every change from the status of the previous day. Just the daily preparation for this conference was a tremendous burden on the time of the Chief of Staff and his officers, who no doubt had more important things to do. As a layman I was astonished at the way Hitler in the course of hearing the reports made deployments, pushed divisions back and forth, or dealt with petty details.

At least during 1942 he received the news of grave setbacks calmly. Or perhaps this was already the beginning of the apathy he later displayed. Outwardly, at any rate, he showed no sign of despair. He seemed determined to present the image of the superior war lord whose composure nothing could shake. Frequently he stressed that his experiences in the trenches of the First World War had given him more insight into many details of military policy than all his military advisers had acquired in the General Staff school. This may well have been true, for certain restricted areas. In the opinion of many army officers, however, his very "trench perspective" had given him a false picture of the process of leadership. In this regard his knowledge of detail, the detailed knowledge of a corporal, rather hampered him. General Fromm commented in his laconic fashion that a civilian as commander in chief might have been better than, of all people, a corporal—moreover one who had never fought in the east and therefore could not conceive the special problems of warfare in this part of the world.

Hitler practiced a policy of patchwork of the pettiest sort. Moreover, he labored under the handicap that the nature of any given terrain cannot really be gathered adequately from maps. In the early summer of 1942 he personally ordered the first six of our Tiger tanks to be thrown into battle. As always, when a new weapon was ready, he expected it to turn the tide of battle. He regaled us with vivid descriptions of how the Soviet 7.7 centimeter antitank guns, which penetrated our Panzer IV front armor even at sizable distances, would fire shot after shot in vain, and how finally the Tiger would roll over

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the antitank gun nests. His staff remonstrated that the terrain he had chosen made tactical deployment of the tanks impossible because of the marshy subsurface on both sides of the road. Hitler dismissed these objections, not sharply, but with a superior air. And so the first Tiger assault started. Everybody was tensely awaiting the results, and I was rather anxious, wondering whether all would go well technically. There was no opportunity for a technical dress rehearsal. The Russians calmly let the tanks roll past an antitank gun position, then fired direct hits at the first and last Tiger. The remaining four thereupon could move neither forward nor backward, nor could they take evasive action to the side because of the swamps, and soon they were also finished off. Hitler silently passed over the debacle; he never referred to it again.

The situation in the western theater of war, at that time still centered in Africa, was taken up next by General Jodl. Here too Hitler tended to intervene in every detail. He was bitterly annoyed with Rommel, who would often give extremely unclear bulletins on the day's movements. In other words, he "veiled" them from headquarters, sometimes for days, only to report an entirely changed situation. Hitler liked Rommel personally but could ill brook this sort of conduct.

Properly speaking, Jodl as chief of the Wehrmacht Operations Staff ought to have coordinated the actions in the various theaters of war. But Hitler had claimed this task for himself, although he did not actually perform it. Basically, Jodl had no clearly defined field of activity. But in order to have something to do, his staff assumed independent leadership in certain theaters, so that in the end two rival general staffs existed for the army. Hitler acted as arbitrator between them—in keeping with that principle of divisiveness he favored. The more critical the situation became, the more vehemently the two rival staffs fought over the shifting of divisions from east to west and vice versa.

Once the "army situation" had been discussed, reports of the events of the last twenty-four hours in the "air situation" and the "naval situation"—as these areas were designated—were reviewed, usually by the liaison officer or the adjutant for this branch of the services, rarely by the commander himself. Attacks on England, the bombings of German cities, were reported briefly, as were the latest accomplishments in submarine warfare. On questions of air and naval warfare

fall 1942

Hitler left his commanders in chief the broadest freedom of choice. At least at that period he rarely intervened, and then only in an advisory capacity.

Toward the end of the conference Keitel presented Hitler with various documents for signature. Usually these were the partly sneered-at, partly dreaded "covering orders"—in other words, orders intended to cover him or someone else against subsequent reprimands from Hitler. At the time I called this procedure an outrageous abuse of Hitler's signature, since it often meant that altogether incompatible ideas and plans were thereby given the form of orders, creating a confusing and impenetrable thicket of contradictions.

The presence of so large a company in the relatively small space made the air stale, which quickly tired me as well as most of the others. A ventilation system had been installed, but Hitler thought it produced "excessive pressure" which resulted in headaches and a feeling of giddiness. Therefore it was switched on only before and after the situation conference. Even in the finest weather the window usually remained closed, and even by day the curtains were drawn. These conditions created an extremely sultry atmosphere.

I had expected respectful silence during these situation conferences and was therefore surprised that the officers who did not happen to be participating in a report talked together freely, though in low voices. Frequently, the officers, showing no further consideration for Hitler's presence, would take seats in the group of chairs at the back of the room. The many marginal conversations created a constant murmur that would have made me nervous. But it disturbed Hitler only when the side conversations grew too excited and too loud. When he raised his head disapprovingly, however, the noise immediately subsided.

From about the autumn of 1942 on, it became almost impossible to oppose Hitler on important questions, unless one went about it very cautiously. Outsiders had a better chance to present objections; Hitler would not stand for them from the group which constituted his daily entourage. Whenever he himself was trying to convince someone, he went far afield and tried as long as possible to keep the discussion on the plane of generalities. He would hardly allow the other person to say a word. If a controversial point arose in the course of the discussion, Hitler usually evaded it skillfully, postponing clarification

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of it to a subsequent conference. He proceeded on the assumption that military men were shy about giving in on points in front of their staff officers. Probably he also expected his aura and his persuasiveness to operate better in a face-to-face discussion with an individual. Both these elements came across poorly over the telephone. Probably that was why Hitler always showed a distinct dislike for conducting important arguments on the telephone.

In the late evening hours there was a further situation conference in which a younger General Staff officer reported on the developments of the last few hours. Hitler would sit alone with the officer. If I had dined with Hitler, he sometimes took me along to these reports. Undoubtedly he found these occasions far more relaxing than the main situation conference, and the atmosphere and tone would be considerably less formal.

Hitler's entourage certainly bore a measure of the blame for his growing belief in his superhuman abilities. Early in the game, Field Marshal Blomberg, Hitler's first and last Minister of War, had been overfond of praising Hitler's surpassing strategic genius. Even a more restrained and modest personality than Hitler ever was would have been in danger of losing all standards of self-criticism under such a constant torrent of applause.

In keeping with his character, Hitler gladly sought advice from persons who saw the situation even more optimistically and delusively than he himself. Keitel was often one of those. When the majority of the officers would greet Hitler's decisions with marked silence, Keitel would frequently feel called upon to speak up in favor of the measure. Constantly in Hitler's presence, he had completely succumbed to his influence. From an honorable, solidly respectable general he had developed in the course of years into a servile flatterer with all the wrong instincts. Basically, Keitel hated his own weakness; but the hopelessness of any dispute with Hitler had ultimately brought him to the point of not even trying to form his own opinion. If, however, he had offered resistance and stubbornly insisted on a view of his own, he would merely have been replaced by another Keitel.

In 1943-44 when Schmudt, Hitler's chief adjutant and army personnel chief, tried, along with many others, to replace Keitel by the much more vigorous Field Marshal Kesselring, Hitler said that he could not do without Keitel because the man was "loyal as a dog" to

* A.H.'s diary
on this point

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After his arrival at the Fuehrer's headquarters, Goering usually withdrew to his pavilion for a few minutes while General Bodenschatz, his liaison officer to Hitler, left the situation conference in order to brief Goering by telephone, so we suspected, on certain disputed questions. Fifteen minutes later, Goering would enter the situation conference. Of his own accord he would emphatically advocate exactly the viewpoint that Hitler wished to put across against the opposition of his generals. Hitler would then look around at his entourage: "You see, the Reich Marshal holds exactly the same opinion as I do."

On the afternoon of November 7, 1942, I accompanied Hitler to Munich in his special train. These journeys were a favorable occasion to draw Hitler into the necessary but time-consuming consideration of general armaments questions. This special train was equipped with radio, teletype machines, and a telephone switchboard. Jodl and some members of the General Staff had joined Hitler.

The atmosphere was tense. We were already many hours late, for at every sizable station a prolonged stop was made in order to connect the telephone cable with the railroad telegraph system, so we could get the latest reports. From early morning on a mighty armada of transports, accompanied by large naval units, had been passing through the Strait of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean.

In earlier years Hitler had made a habit of showing himself at the window of his special train whenever it stopped. Now these encounters with the outside world seemed undesirable to him; instead, the shades on the station side of the train would be lowered. Late in the evening we sat with Hitler in his rosewood-paneled dining car. The table was elegantly set with silver flatware, cut glass, good china, and flower arrangements. As we began our ample meal, none of us at first saw that a freight train was stopped on the adjacent track. From the cattle car bedraggled, starved, and in some cases wounded German soldiers, just returning from the east, stared at the diners. With a start, Hitler noticed the somber scene two yards from his window. Without as much as a gesture of greeting in their direction, he peremptorily ordered his servant to draw the shades. This, then, in the second half of the war, was how Hitler handled a meeting with ordinary front-line soldiers such as he himself had once been.

At every station along the way the number of reported naval units

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rose. An enterprise of vast proportions was obviously afoot. Finally the units passed through the Strait. All the ships reported by our air reconnaissance were now moving eastward in the Mediterranean. "This is the largest landing operation that has ever taken place in the history of the world," Hitler declared in a tone of respect, perhaps taking pride that he was the cause of enterprises of such magnitude. Until the following morning the landing fleet remained north of the Moroccan and Algerian coast.

In the course of the night Hitler proposed several different explanations for this mysterious behavior. He thought the most probable thing was that the enemy was undertaking a great supply operation to reinforce the offensive against the hard-pressed Africa Corps. The naval units were keeping together in this way, he concluded, in order to advance through the narrow strait between Sicily and Africa under cover of darkness, safe from German air attacks. Or else, and this second version corresponded more to his feeling for perilous military operations: "The enemy will land in central Italy tonight. There he would meet with no resistance at all. There are no German troops there, and the Italians will run away. That way they can cut northern Italy off from the south. What will become of Rommel in that case? He would be lost in a short time. He has no reserves and supplies will no longer come through."

Hitler intoxicated himself with thoughts of far-reaching operations, of a kind he had long been missing. He more and more put himself into the position of the enemy: "I would occupy Rome at once and form a new Italian government. Or, and this would be the third possibility, I would use this great fleet to land in southern France. We have always been too gentle. And now this is what we get for it! No fortifications and no German troops at all down there. A great mistake that we have nothing garrisoned there. The Pétain government won't put up a bit of resistance, of course." From moment to moment he seemed to forget that these forces were gathering against himself.

Hitler's guesses were wide of the mark. It would never have occurred to him not to associate such a landing operation with a coup. To put the troops on land in safe positions from which they could methodically spread out, to take no unnecessary risks—that was a strategy alien to his nature. But that night he clearly realized one thing: Now the second front was beginning to be a reality.

By the next day the Allied troops were pouring ashore in North

Africa. Nevertheless, memorization of his failure we all were when, in this situation and calling for "victory-is-certain" to be gressed about our endeavor forth his homage, "if it . . . We will not fall; c

In the late autumn course of a situation of cadets into the struggle the end. A country sacrifice it has nothing left."

A few weeks later, in a great Russian winter of Obersalzberg days before to lead to the capitulation. There, after violent air broken through the position first to explain and believe on the fighting qualities troops began to overwhelm beginning to crumble.

Hitler paced back and

Our generals are making estimate the strength of reports, the enemy's has weakened; they have lost wants to accept such a trained! No offensive what it takes! In the end to a halt. They'll run divisions; that will put

In the peaceful atmosphere stand what was brewing. pouring in, he rushed back

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Africa. Nevertheless, Hitler went ahead with his speech in commemoration of his failed putsch of 1923. I still remember how shocked we all were when, instead of at least referring to the gravity of the situation and calling for a mustering of energies, he adopted his usual "victory-is-certain" tone: "They've already become idiots," he digressed about our enemy, whose operations had only yesterday called forth his homage, "if they think that they can ever shatter Germany. . . . We will not fall; consequently, the others will fall."

In the late autumn of 1942, Hitler triumphantly stated in the course of a situation conference: "Now the Russians are sending their cadets into the struggle.⁴ That's the surest proof they have reached the end. A country sacrifices the next generation of officers only when it has nothing left."

A few weeks later, on November 19, 1942, the first reports of the great Russian winter offensive reached Hitler, who had withdrawn to Obersalzberg days before. The offensive, which nine weeks later was to lead to the capitulation of Stalingrad,⁵ began near Serafinov. There, after violent artillery preparations, strong Soviet forces had broken through the positions of Rumanian divisions. Hitler tried at first to explain and belittle this disaster by making slurring remarks on the fighting qualities of his allies. But shortly afterward the Soviet troops began overwhelming German divisions as well. The front was beginning to crumble.

Hitler paced back and forth in the great hall of the Berghof.

Our generals are making their old mistakes again. They always overestimate the strength of the Russians. According to all the front-line reports, the enemy's human material is no longer sufficient. They are weakened; they have lost far too much blood. But of course nobody wants to accept such reports. Besides, how badly Russian officers are trained! No offensive can be organized with such officers. We know what it takes! In the short or long run the Russians will simply come to a halt. They'll run down. Meanwhile we shall throw in a few fresh divisions; that will put things right.

In the peaceful atmosphere of the Berghof he simply did not understand what was brewing. But three days later, when the bad news kept pouring in, he rushed back to East Prussia.

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A few days afterward at Rastenburg the strategic map showed the area from Voronezh to Stalingrad covered with red arrows across a front a hundred and twenty-five miles wide. These represented the thrust of the Soviet troops. Among all the arrows were small blue circles, pockets of resistance by the remnants of German and allied divisions. Stalingrad was already surrounded by red rings. Disturbed, Hitler now commanded units to be detached from all other sectors of the front and from the occupied territories and dispatched in all haste to the southern sector. No operational reserve was available, although General Zeitzler had pointed out long before the emergency that each of the divisions in southern Russia had to defend a frontal sector of unusual length* and would not be able to cope with a vigorous assault by Soviet troops.

Stalingrad was encircled. Zeitzler, his face flushed and haggard from lack of sleep, insisted that the Sixth Army must break out to the west. He deluged Hitler with data on all that the army lacked, both as regards to rations and fuel, so that it had become impossible to provide warm meals for the soldiers exposed to fierce cold in the snow-swept fields or the scanty shelter of ruins. Hitler remained calm, unmoved and deliberate, as if bent on showing that Zeitzler's agitation was a psychotic reaction in the face of danger. "The counterattack from the south that I have ordered will soon relieve Stalingrad. That will recoup the situation. We have been in such positions often before, you know. In the end we always had the problem in hand again." He gave orders for supply trains to be dispatched right behind the troops deploying for the counteroffensive, so that as soon as Stalingrad was relieved something could at once be done about alleviating the plight of the soldiers. Zeitzler disagreed, and Hitler let him talk without interrupting. The forces provided for the counterattack were too weak, Zeitzler said. But if they could unite successfully with a Sixth Army that had broken out to the west, they would then be able to establish new positions farther to the south. Hitler offered counterarguments, but Zeitzler held to his view. Finally, after the discussion had gone on for more than half an hour, Hitler's patience snapped: "Stalingrad simply must be held. It must be; it is a key position. By breaking

* Establishing the new line of defense, Orel-Stalingrad-Terek River-Maikop, meant that the troops had to defend a line 2.3 times longer than the Orel-Black Sea position taken in the spring.

traffic on the Volga and difficulties. How are the Russians to get to the north?" "No, rather, that Stalingrad is the key position," being the discussion.

Next day the situation was even more urgent; the air was somber; and even Hitler spoke of a breakthrough of supplies were over two hundred thousand tons.

Twenty-four hours sealed. For Goering, looking like an operetta Reich Marshal. He asked him: "What snapped to attention guarantee the supply? As I later heard from the calculations that support instantly voiced his sincerely the business of tions. Hitler, who figures, on this day necessary planes could mere words, and Stalingrad can be held! It is out of the Sixth Army no fighting strength!"

Although Goering Stalingrad hung on invitations to his side. Richard Wagner's *Lohengrin* destroyed Berlin. Stalingrad we took our seats in

* Later experience belies Hitler's theory, a pocket served its purpose.

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traffic on the Volga at that spot, we cause the Russians the greatest difficulties. How are they going to transport their grain from southern Russia to the north?" That did not sound convincing; I had the feeling, rather, that Stalingrad was a symbol for him. But for the time being the discussion ended after this dispute.

Next day the situation had worsened. Zeitzler's pleas had grown even more urgent; the atmosphere in the situation conference was somber; and even Hitler looked exhausted and downcast. Once he too spoke of a breakout. Once more he asked for figures on how many tons of supplies were needed daily to maintain the fighting strength of over two hundred thousand soldiers.

Twenty-four hours later the fate of the encircled army was finally sealed. For Goering appeared in the situation room, brisk and beaming like an operetta tenor who is supposed to portray a victorious Reich Marshal. Depressed, with a beseeching note in his voice, Hitler asked him: "What about supplying Stalingrad by air?" Goering snapped to attention and declared solemnly: "My leader! I personally guarantee the supplying of Stalingrad by air. You can rely on that." As I later heard from Milch, the Air Force General Staff had in fact calculated that supplying the pocket was impossible. Zeitzler, too, instantly voiced his doubts. But Goering retorted that it was exclusively the business of the air force to undertake the necessary calculations. Hitler, who could be so pedantic about erecting edifices of figures, on this day did not even ask for an accounting of how the necessary planes could be made available. He had revived at Goering's mere words, and had recovered his old staunchness. "Then Stalingrad can be held! It is foolish to go on talking any more about a breakout of the Sixth Army. It would lose all its heavy weapons and have no fighting strength left. The Sixth Army remains in Stalingrad!"*

Although Goering knew that the fate of the army encircled in Stalingrad hung on his promise, on December 12, 1942,* he issued invitations to his subordinates to attend a festive performance of Richard Wagner's *Die Meistersinger* to celebrate the reopening of the destroyed Berlin State Opera House. In gala uniforms or full dress we took our seats in the Fuehrer's big box. The jovial plot of the opera

* Later experience with battles fought in winter by the retreating armies belies Hitler's theory, since adopted by some historians, that the Stalingrad pocket served its purpose because it tied up the Soviet forces for eight weeks.

1942, Jan 1943

painfully contrasted with the events at the front, so that I kept chiding myself for having accepted the invitation.

A few days later I was back at the Fuehrer's headquarters. Zeitzler was now giving a daily report on the tons of rations and munitions the Sixth Army was receiving by air. They came to only a fraction of the promised quantities. Goering, repeatedly called to account by Hitler, had excuses: The weather was bad, fog, freezing rain, or snowstorms had so far prevented commitment of as many planes as planned. But as soon as the weather changed, Goering said, he would be able to deliver the promised tonnage.

Thereupon, food rations had to be reduced still further in Stalingrad. Zeitzler conspicuously had himself served the same rations in the General Staff casino, and visibly lost weight. After a few days of this Hitler informed him that he considered it improper for a chief of staff to wear out his nerves with such demonstrations of solidarity with the troops. He commanded Zeitzler to resume at once taking sufficient nourishment. However, for a few weeks Hitler prohibited the serving of champagne and cognac. The mood became blacker and blacker. Faces froze into masks. Often we stood about in silence. No one wanted to talk about the gradual destruction of what had been, only a few months before, a victorious army.

But Hitler went on hoping; he was still hoping when I once more was at headquarters from January 2 to 7. The counterattack he had ordered, which was supposed to break the ring around Stalingrad and bring fresh supplies to the dying army, had failed two weeks before. The sole remaining hope, and that a faint one, lay in a decision to evacuate the pocket.

One day, while I waited outside the situation room, I heard Zeitzler urging Keitel, literally begging him, on this day at least to support him in persuading Hitler to give the order for evacuation. This was the last moment to avert a fearful catastrophe, Zeitzler said. Keitel emphatically agreed and solemnly promised Zeitzler that he would help as requested. But at the situation conference, when Hitler once again stressed the necessity of holding out in Stalingrad, Keitel strode emotionally toward him, pointed to the map, where a small remnant of the city was surrounded by thick red rings, and declared: "Mein Fuehrer, we will hold that!"

In this hopeless situation, on January 15, 1943, Hitler signed a special decree giving Field Marshal Milch the power to take all meas-

ures in the air for sary for supplying. At the time I tel me to rescue my circled troops in proved impossible. He had jaundice : could not endure comrades at an : was heard from l peated by hundre tinued to receive all over.** In the catastrophe for w stead, he commar which was suppos and a half later, : by the Russians an

Our enemies ri ing point in the v was a temporary in which the mo: conceiving plans f Reich, already to did not close ranl On the contrary, splitting all the c higher stakes than

* Milch directed Stalingrad. He was a at least some of the Milch was received l the desperate milit: acknowledge.

** Hitler could n wild rumors. But w home postcards, Hit of life from the rela being so carefully c me about this at N:

Winter 1942

301² Intrigues

Lammers. As it turned out, however, he had to leave these decisions more and more to Bormann, since he himself had little access to Hitler. Bormann had reserved the field of domestic policy for himself. But he not only lacked the intelligence for these matters; he also had insufficient knowledge of the outside world. For more than eight years he had been little more than Hitler's shadow. He had never dared go on any lengthy business trips, or even to allow himself a vacation, for fear that his influence might diminish. From his own days as Hess's deputy, Bormann knew the perils of ambitious deputies. For Hitler was all too ready to treat the second men in an organization, as soon as they were presented to him, as members of his staff and to make assignments directly to them. This quirk accorded with his tendency to divide power wherever he encountered it. Moreover, he loved to see new faces, to try out new persons. In order to avoid raising up such a rival in his own household, many a minister took care not to appoint an intelligent and vigorous deputy.

The plan of these three men to surround Hitler, to filter his information and thus control his power, might have led to an abridgement of Hitler's one-man rule—had the Committee of Three consisted of men possessing initiative, imagination, and a sense of responsibility. But since they had been trained always to act in Hitler's name, they slavishly depended on the expressions of his will. What is more, Hitler soon stopped abiding by this regulation. It became a nuisance to him, and was, moreover, contrary to his temperament. But it is understandable that those who stood outside this ring resented its stranglehold.

In fact Bormann was now assuming a role which could be dangerous to the top functionaries. He alone, with Hitler's compliance, drew up the appointments calendar, which meant that he decided which civilian members of the government or party could see, or more important, could not see, the Fuehrer. By now, hardly any of the ministers, Reichsleiters, or Gauleiters could penetrate to Hitler. They all had to ask Bormann to present their programs to him. Bormann was very efficient. Usually the official in question received an answer in writing within a few days, whereas in the past he would have had to wait for months. I was one of the exceptions to this rule. Since my sphere was military in nature, I had access to Hitler whenever I wished. Hitler's military adjutants were the ones who set up my appointments.

D.T. His own hardness - immense.
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Summer 1942

INSIDE THE THIRD REICH 302 L

After my conferences with Hitler, it sometimes happened that the adjutant would announce Bormann, who would then come into the room carrying his files. In a few sentences he would report on the memoranda sent to him. He spoke monotonously and with seeming objectivity and would then advance his own solution. Usually Hitler merely nodded and spoke his terse, "Agreed." On the basis of this one word, or even a vague comment by Hitler, which was hardly meant as a directive, Bormann would often draft lengthy instructions. In this way ten or more important decisions were sometimes made within half an hour. De facto, Bormann was conducting the internal affairs of the Reich. A few months afterward, on April 12, 1943, Bormann obtained Hitler's signature to a seemingly unimportant piece of paper. He became "Secretary to the Fuehrer." Whereas previously his powers, strictly speaking, should have been restricted to party affairs, this new position now authorized him to act officially in any field he wished.

After my first major achievements in the field of armaments, Goebbels's hostility toward me, apparent ever since his affair with Lida Baarova, gave way to good will. In the summer of 1942, I had asked him to put his propaganda apparatus to work to speed armaments production. Newsreels, picture magazines, and newspapers were required to publish articles on the subject. My prestige rose. Thanks to this directive by the Propaganda Minister, I became one of the best-known personages in the Reich. This improvement in my status in its turn was useful to my associates in their daily bouts with government and party bureaus.

All of Goebbels's speeches sounded the note of stereotyped fanaticism, but it would be quite wrong to think of him as a hot-blooded man seething with temperament. Goebbels was a hard worker and something of a martinet about the way his ideas were carried out. But he never let the minutiae make him lose sight of the whole situation. He had the gift of abstracting problems from their surrounding circumstances so that, as it seemed to me then, he could arrive at objective judgments. I was impressed by his cynicism, but also by the logical arrangement of his ideas, which revealed his university training. Toward Hitler, however, he seemed extremely constrained.

During the first, successful phase of the war, Goebbels had shown no signs of ambition. On the contrary, as early as 1940 he expressed

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Dec 1942, 1943

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his intention of devoting himself to his many personal interests once the war was brought to a victorious conclusion. It would then be time for the next generation to assume responsibility, he would say.

In December 1942 the disastrous course of affairs prompted him to invite three of his colleagues to call on him more often: Walther Funk, Robert Ley, and myself. The choice was typical of Goebbels, for we were all men of academic background, university graduates.

Stalingrad had shaken us—not only the tragedy of the Sixth Army's soldiers, but even more, perhaps, the question of how such a disaster could have taken place under Hitler's orders. For hitherto there had always been a success to offset every setback; hitherto there had been a new triumph to compensate for all losses or at least make everyone forget them. Now for the first time we had suffered a defeat for which there was no compensation.

In one of our discussions at the beginning of 1943, Goebbels made the point that we had had great military successes at the beginning of the war while taking only half-measures inside the Reich. Consequently, we had thought we could go on being victorious without great efforts. The British, on the other hand, had been luckier in that Dunkirk had taken place right at the beginning of the war. This defeat had made them aware of the need to tighten up on the civilian economy. Now Stalingrad was our Dunkirk! The war could no longer be won simply by engendering confidence.

In speaking this way Goebbels was referring to the information he had from his band of correspondents concerning the uneasiness and dissatisfaction among the populace. The public was actually demanding a ban on all luxuries, which did not help the national struggle. In general, Goebbels said, he could sense a great readiness among the people to exert themselves to the utmost. In fact, significant restrictions were a real necessity if only to revive popular confidence in the leadership.

From the viewpoint of armaments, considerable sacrifices were certainly required. Hitler had demanded a step-up in production. What was more, in order to compensate for the tremendous casualties on the eastern front, eight hundred thousand of the younger skilled workers were going to be drafted.¹ Every subtraction of the German labor force would add to the difficulties all our factories were encountering.

On the other hand, the air raids had shown that life could con-

Our heaviest expense was in fact the elaborate defensive measures. In the Reich and in the western theaters of war the barrels of ten thousand antiaircraft guns were pointed toward the sky.² The same guns could have well been employed in Russia against tanks and other ground targets. Had it not been for this new front, the air front over Germany, our defensive strength against tanks would have been about doubled, as far as equipment was concerned. Moreover, the antiaircraft force tied down hundreds of thousands of young soldiers. A third of the optical industry was busy producing gunsights for the flak batteries. About half of the electronics industry was engaged in producing radar and communications networks for defense against bombing. Simply because of this, in spite of the high level of the German electronics and optical industries, the supply of our front-line troops with modern equipment remained far behind that of the Western armies.*

We were given a foretaste of our coming woes as early as the night of May 30, 1942, when the British gathered all their forces for an attack on Cologne with ten hundred and forty-six bombers.

By chance Milch and I were summoned to see Goering on the morning after the raid. This time he was not residing in Karinhall, but at Veldenstein castle in Franconia. We found him in a bad humor, still not believing the reports of the Cologne bombing. "Impossible, that many bombs cannot be dropped in a single night," he snarled at his adjutant. "Connect me with the Gauleiter of Cologne."

There followed, in our presence, a preposterous telephone conversation. "The report from your police commissioner is a stinking lie!" Apparently the Gauleiter begged to differ. "I tell you as the Reich Marshal that the figures cited are simply too high. How can you dare report such fantasies to the Fuehrer!" The Gauleiter at the other end of the line was evidently insisting on his figures. "How are you going to count the fire bombs? Those are nothing but estimates. I tell you once more they're many times too high. All wrong! Send another report to the Fuehrer at once revising your figures. Or are you

* Thus a serious shortage of army communications equipment developed—for instance, walkie-talkies for the infantry and sound-ranging apparatus for the artillery. In addition, further development of such devices had to be neglected in favor of antiaircraft weaponry.

trying to imply that I am in the Fuehrer with the correct

As though nothing had happened, his parents' former house, he had blueprints of the magnificent citadel he had in the Biedermeier house of his first of all he wanted to be for that were already drawn

Three days later I was in an air raid on Cologne had the curious telephone conversation with Goering. Grohé—naturally assumed authentic than the Gau own opinion. He preserved newspapers on the enormous raid and the quantity of even higher than those was furious with Goering the staff of the air force raid was received as usual

As early as September the production of Friedrich Schweinfurt were crucial increased antiaircraft production early recognized, the war instead of vast but pointed on the centers of armaments posed to Hitler that a determining the crucial weeks later, however, the British air force—to a single nerve center was to paralyze a cross made useless by the remaining nineteen bombers of the industry by destroying it

The report that reached

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Spring 1942 -
Summer 1943

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Hitler in the Autumn of 1943

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BOTH HIS OLD ASSOCIATES AND HIS ADJUTANTS AGREED THAT HITLER had undergone a change in the past year. This could scarcely be surprising, for during this period he had experienced Stalingrad, had looked on powerlessly as a quarter of a million soldiers surrendered in Tunisia, and had seen German cities leveled. Along with all this he had to approve the navy's decision to withdraw the U-boats from the Atlantic, thus relinquishing one of his greatest hopes for victory. Undoubtedly, Hitler could see the meaning of this turn of affairs. And undoubtedly he reacted to it as human beings do, with disappointment, dejection, and increasingly forced optimism.

In the years since then, Hitler may have become the object of sober studies for the historian. But for me he possesses to this day a substantiality and physical presence, as if he still existed in the flesh. Between the spring of 1942 and the summer of 1943 he sometimes spoke despondently. But, then, a curious transformation seemed to take place in him. Even in desperate situations he displayed confidence in ultimate victory. From this later period I can scarcely recall

* D. & altogether my doing. I would offer him the most extraordinary help in his dream

349 Hitler in

any remarks on the depicting them. Had he now firmly believed in events moved toward more rigidly convinced

His closest associate: ately made his decision intellectually more sluggish new ideas. It was as if he could no longer find the

Underlying all this was by the superior power of issued a demand for G probably the only German the seriousness of this would talk about exp. Allies. Still others imagine vice by which he could he not earlier, starting with the Soviet Union, new tricks, new shifts, conferences, he more as There is no turning back our bridges." In speaking off from any negotiation revealed at the Nuremberg

One of the causes of thought at the time, was He was working in an Russian campaign he of administering the affairs spells of indolence in enormous daily mass of how to let others work responsibility for detail into a strictly discipline his nature, and this was cisions.

minor aspects of it were learned from the eastern ally repressed. Decisions

under the tremendous was more welcome than need of a decision and for failure. Only rarely staff applying for front-conflicts of conscience To this day the whole of a great deal of criticism across our reserves them. In the stupefying moved by what Hitler's were fighting and dying. In emergencies that off a retreat proposed

to the front regularly. He moreover decided on so. If he were too ill, if he were fearful for the army.

shown him and his staff much blood. But Hitler had the army from their enter and its road con- had to live in holes in quipped, exhausted and been shattered. At the up to full strength, and e pushed about on the n previous fighting and r, Hitler frequently set Since he invariably ornaments came under fire power to bear. The result

is mind as under I

was that the men were led piecemeal up to the enemy and slowly annihilated.

The communications apparatus at headquarters was remarkable for that period. It was possible to communicate directly with all the important theaters of war. But Hitler overestimated the merits of the telephone, radio, and teletype. For thanks to this apparatus the responsible army commanders were robbed of every chance for independent action, in contrast to earlier wars. Hitler was constantly intervening on their sectors of the front. Because of this communications apparatus individual divisions in all the theaters of war could be directed from Hitler's table in the situation room. The more fearful the situation, the greater was the gulf modern technology created between reality and the fantasies with which the man at this table operated.

Military leadership is primarily a matter of intelligence, tenacity, and iron nerves. Hitler thought he had all these qualities in far greater measure than his generals. Again and again he predicted, although only after the disaster of the winter of 1941-42, that even the worst situations could be overcome and, indeed, that only in such situations would he prove how firmly he stood and how sound his nerves were.*

Such remarks were scarcely complimentary toward the officers present; but Hitler was often capable of turning to the General Staff officers of his entourage and insulting them directly. He would tell them that they were not steadfast, that they were always wanting to retreat, that they were prepared to give up ground without any reason. These cowards on the General Staff would never have dared to start a war, he would say; they had always advised against it, always maintained that our forces were far too weak. But who had been proved right, if not himself! He would run down the usual list of earlier military successes and review the negative attitudes of the General Staff before these operations began—which produced a ghostly impression, given the situation that had meanwhile arisen. In going over the past

6 days after the assassination attempt
* On July 26, 1944, Hitler boasted to the heads of industry: "All I know is that unprecedentedly strong nerves and unprecedented resolution are necessary if a leader is to survive in times such as these and make decisions which concern our very existence. . . . Any other man in my place would have been unable to do what I have done; his nerves would not have been strong enough."

Winter '41-42

July 26, 1944

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frustrating my intention ever more apparent under the leaders of kind of "coup d'état," my days as Hitler's chief organization Section,¹³ and organization under their

ardens of the year 1943, ents and intrigues, by of the world within our and 1942, Hitler had and Russia because he me too indispensable. ado.

ar-motored Focke-Wulf of its built-in reserve amateur magician who ne of Kalanag, accom- ing speeches, we would soldiers and Todt Or- ve looked down at Fin- had longed to explore in the last glimmers of Rovaniemi on a primi- ene lamps.

and seventy-five miles small Arctic port of Pet- line monotony, but the des from yellow to red, had a fantastic beauty. es for workers, soldiers evenings in the other personal blockhouse of

From here we visited hernmost and the most es from Murmansk. It greenish light slanted treeless, deathly rigid

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landscape. Accompanied by General Hengl, we slowly worked our way on skis to the advance strongpoints. At one of these positions a unit demonstrated to me the effect of one of our 15 centimeter infantry howitzers on a Soviet dugout. It was the first "test-firing" with live ammunition I had really witnessed. For when one of the heavy batteries at Cape Griz-Nez was demonstrated to me, the commander said his target was Dover but then explained that in reality he had ordered his men to fire into the water. Here, on the other hand, the gunners scored a direct hit and the wooden beams of the Russian dugout flew into the air. Immediately afterward a lance corporal right beside me collapsed without a sound. A Soviet sharpshooter had hit him in the head through the observation slit. Oddly enough, this was the first time I had been confronted with the reality of the war. I had been acquainted with our infantry howitzers only as technical items to be demonstrated on a shooting range; now I suddenly saw how this instrument, which I had regarded purely theoretically, was used to destroy human beings.

During this inspection tour both our soldiers and officers complained about our lack of light infantry weapons. They particularly missed an effective submachine gun. The soldiers made do with captured Soviet weapons of this type.

Hitler was directly responsible for this situation. The former First World War infantryman still clung to his familiar carbine. In the summer of 1942 he decided against a submachine gun that had already been developed and ruled that the rifle better served the ends of the infantry. One lingering effect of his own experience in the trenches was, as I now saw in practice, that he promoted the heavy weapons and tanks he had then admired, to the neglect of infantry weapons.

Immediately after my return I tried to correct this unbalance. At the beginning of January our infantry program was supported with specific requests from the army General Staff and the Commander in Chief of the reserve army. But Hitler, as his own expert on matters of armaments, waited six months before approving our proposals, only afterward to hector us for any failure to meet our quotas on the deadlines. Within three-quarters of a year we achieved significant increases in this important area. In the case of the submachine gun we actually expanded production twenty-fold—though, to be sure, hardly any of these guns had been produced previously.¹⁵ We could have

1944, 1942

junction with the jet fighters, would have beaten back the Western Allies' air offensive against our industry from the spring of 1944 on. Instead, gigantic effort and expense went into developing and manufacturing long-range rockets which proved to be, when they were at last ready for use in the autumn of 1944, an almost total failure. Our most expensive project was also our most foolish one. Those rockets, which were our pride and for a time my favorite armaments project, proved to be nothing but a mistaken investment. On top of that, they were one of the reasons we lost the defensive war in the air.

Ever since the winter of 1939, I had been closely associated with the Peenemünde development center, although at first all I was doing was meeting its construction needs. I liked mingling with this circle of nonpolitical young scientists and investors headed by Wernher von Braun—twenty-seven years old, purposeful, a man realistically at home in the future. It was extraordinary that so young and untried a team should be allowed to pursue a project costing hundreds of millions of marks and whose realization seemed far away. Under the somewhat paternalistic direction of Colonel Walter Dornberger these young men were able to work unhampered by bureaucratic obstacles and pursue ideas which at times sounded thoroughly utopian.

The work, mere glimmerings of which were being sketched out in 1939, also exerted a strange fascination upon me. It was like the planning of a miracle. I was impressed anew by these technicians with their fantastic visions, these mathematical romantics. Whenever I visited Peenemünde I also felt, quite spontaneously, somehow akin to them. My sympathy stood them in good stead when in the late fall of 1939 Hitler crossed the rocket project off his list of urgent undertakings and thus automatically cut off its labor and materials. By tacit agreement with the Army Ordnance Office, I continued to build the Peenemünde installations without its approval—a liberty that probably no one but myself could have taken.

After my appointment as Minister of Armaments, I naturally took a keener interest in this great project. Hitler, however, continued to be exceedingly skeptical. He was filled with a fundamental distrust of all innovations which, as in the case of jet aircraft or atom bombs, went beyond the technical experience of the First World War generation and presaged an era he could not know.

On June 13, 1942, the armaments chiefs of the three branches of

the armed forces, Field Marshal Fromm, flew to Peenemünde with a remote-controlled rocket. Before it towered an unreal-looking missile, Wernher von Braun, an inventor was placing on this experiment was not the development of a new technology.

Wisps of vapor showed that the predetermined second, at first with the roar of an unleashed giant, seemed to stand upon its jet of fire then vanished with a howl into the sky. The rocket was beaming. For my part, I saw a miracle, at its precision and at the defiance of gravity, so that thirteen tons could be guided by any mechanical guidance.

The technicians were just explaining the projectile was covering when, a minute later, a swelling howl indicated that the rocket was in the vicinity. We all froze where we stood, a mile away. The guidance system was working. Nevertheless the technicians were confident the problem had been solved: getting it on target. It continued to have the "gravest" difficulty. The guidance capability could ever be developed.

On October 14, 1942, I was informed that the rocket could be over. The second rocket was on a prescribed course of one hundred miles within two and a half miles of the target. The man's inventive mind had grazed the target of sixty miles. It seemed like at this point did Hitler, too, show a change of heart. He underwent instant inflation. He put into action a flock of five thousand rockets, "available for wholesale commitment."

* See *Führerprotokoll*, October 13-14.

— 4 mo. later

Oct 1942

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the armed forces, Field Marshal Milch, Admiral Witzell, and General Fromm, flew to Peenemünde with me to witness the first firing of a remote-controlled rocket. Before us in a clearing among the pines towered an unreal-looking missile four stories high. Colonel Dornberger, Wernher von Braun, and the staff were as full of suspense over this first launching as we were. I knew what hopes the young inventor was placing on this experiment. For him and his team this was not the development of a weapon, but a step into the future of technology.

Wisps of vapor showed that the fuel tanks were being filled. At the predetermined second, at first with a faltering motion but then with the roar of an unleashed giant, the rocket rose slowly from its pad, seemed to stand upon its jet of flame for the fraction of a second, then vanished with a howl into the low clouds. Wernher von Braun was beaming. For my part, I was thunderstruck at this technical miracle, at its precision and at the way it seemed to abolish the laws of gravity, so that thirteen tons could be hurtled into the air without any mechanical guidance.

The technicians were just explaining the incredible distance the projectile was covering when, a minute and a half after the start, a rapidly swelling howl indicated that the rocket was falling in the immediate vicinity. We all froze where we stood. It struck the ground only a half a mile away. The guidance system had failed, as we later learned. Nevertheless the technicians were satisfied, since the thorniest problem had been solved: getting it off the ground. Hitler, however, continued to have the "gravest doubts" and wondered whether a guidance capability could ever be developed.⁷

On October 14, 1942, I was able to inform him that his doubts could be over. The second rocket had successfully flown the prescribed course of one hundred and twenty miles and had struck within two and a half miles of the target. For the first time a product of man's inventive mind had grazed the frontiers of space at an altitude of sixty miles. It seemed like the first step toward a dream. Only at this point did Hitler, too, show lively interest. As usual, his desires underwent instant inflation. He insisted that before the rocket was put into action a flock of five thousand missiles was to be ready, "available for wholesale commitment."⁸

* See *Führerprotokoll*, October 13-14, 1942, Point 25. Even 5000 long-range

— 4 mo. later

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Jan 1942

Goebbels

44: A Fate Which Beggars All Description

IN New York an old enemy, Albert C. Grzesinski, former police chief in Berlin, proclaimed his intention of overthrowing the Nazis and taking power himself. With enemies like Grzesinski, reflected Goebbels, one barely needed allies.¹ He was not afraid of the Americans. There were limits to what even they could do. 'It isn't easy to raise and equip an army,' he commented, 'as we know only too well.'² He ordered anti-American propaganda prepared however, mocking their lack of culture and their grotesque jazz music.³ He had discussed a Japanese fanfare for announcing the coming Far East victories; a corresponding Italian fanfare was also to be selected 'in case there are any Italian victories.'⁴ Foreseeing race problems, he forbade any hint of the phrase Yellow Peril in their domestic propaganda.⁵

He found it difficult now to fault British propaganda. Dietrich had not helped with his premature announcement of victory in October. 'It's a pity,' Goebbels wrote, "that we have had so many different agencies cutting the ground away beneath our feet with their silliness."⁶ He told his staff that Churchill had done the right thing in promising his people only blood, sweat, and tears. He had learned to allow morale to slump after setbacks; it was easier to restore afterward.⁷ He proposed to copy Churchill's methods. He actually asked Backe if planned food-ration cuts could be brought forward.⁸ 'The German people,' he said, 'should get in tune with the war situation and not sustain false hopes.'⁹ Once he defined it as his classical mission in this war to become 'the architect of the German soul.'¹⁰

He would willingly have proclaimed total war, the mobilization of all available manpower from the home economy for the war effort, there and then. When his former press officer Moritz von Schirmeister returned from the eastern front in January 1942 he heard Goebbels expatiate several times during meals on the need for the government to implement total war.¹¹ The media were still showing peacetime-flavored pictures of lavish social functions even now.¹² Putting deeds before words, he replaced three hundred men of his own ministry with women.¹³

Hitler's riflemen had paid winter's cruel price. By late January 1942 they had suffered 1,856 amputations.¹⁴ Goebbels addressed them all in his first *Das Reich* article of the new year. 'It behooves us to remain tough and composed,' he wrote.¹⁵ Hitler, a stickler for style, disliked that word 'composed,' and decided on the strength of it that Goebbels should not

Jan 30
deliver the party's anniversary speech on January 30. 'I know how to preserve the golden mean between reason and rhetoric,' he explained over supper in the minister's absence. 'I'd not have expressed myself like that. In a situation like this, the soldier is not composed but resolute. When you've been through it yourself you get a feel for these things.'¹⁶

Characteristically when Goebbels came for lunch the next day Hitler bit his tongue and said nothing of this. They talked of Britain's eclipse in the Far East. In three weeks the Führer expected the Japanese to overrun Singapore. 'Perhaps,' he mused to Dr Goebbels, 'there is a chance here to bring Britain, if not to her senses, at least to reconsider her position.' He had succeeded in stabilizing Germany's own eastern front. For three weeks he had worked round the clock, reviving the spirits of his demoralized generals in endless conferences and telephone arguments—he described these commanders unflatteringly as like inflatable dummies with slow punctures. Goebbels told Hitler that according to Major Martin many officers in the High Command had openly predicted that the Soviet armies would be on East Prussia's frontiers that spring. Hitler angrily told him to get a list of their names.¹⁷ Back in Berlin Goebbels directed the unfortunate major that it was now his duty to draw up this black list. 'There is only one sin,' he said, quoting Friedrich Nietzsche, 'and that is cowardice.'¹⁸ It was perhaps significant that he was now automatically extending his remit far beyond the portals of his own ministry. A day or two later Schirmeister's wife Emmi, invited by Magda to dinner, innocently told of an officer cousin who had plied her in East Prussia with dark rumors that the Russians were coming. Goebbels told her to name that officer too, saying, 'I guarantee he will be shot within twenty-four hours.'¹⁹

BEFORE leaving the Wolf's Lair on January 19 Dr Goebbels had also touched briefly on the Jewish problem. 'On this,' he noted, unable to hang any meat on the now threadbare phrases, 'the Führer holds without qualification to the existing and proper hard-line view.'²⁰

Jan 20
Behind closed doors the Final Solution, in all its heathen criminality, was already undergoing a deadly shift of emphasis. As Goebbels arrived back in Berlin on January 20 Heydrich was holding his first inter-ministerial conference on the topic at Wannsee, a suburb of Berlin.²¹ The ambitious, amoral S.S. Oberguppenführer had issued the original invitations back in November, including one to Goebbels' Staatssekretär Gutterer, but Gutterer had never received it and the propaganda ministry was one of several not represented at this conference.²² The conference was largely window-dressing anyway. Chaos was spreading in the eastern territories as more trainloads of Jewish evacuees arrived there. Hans Frank's Government-General was flatly refusing to accept any more—Frank had exclaimed irritably at one of his Cabinet meetings in Kraków that Berlin was telling them they'd got no use for the Jews either. 'Liquidate them yourselves!' was his retort.²³ Two more batches, of 1,037 and 1,006 Jews, had left Berlin for Riga on January 13 and 19; but the train

which left was the last.

Goebbels sinister plan for war would project the Jews as heathen devils at all, appropriate prohibitions, kiosks, and

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Jan 13+ 19

which left Berlin, also for Riga, on January 25, loaded with 1,051 Jews, was the last batch for two months.²⁴

Goebbels heard his Führer recall, in his speech of January 30, the sinister prophecy which he had made exactly three years before that this war would bring the 'destruction of Jewry.'²⁵ His own evil deportation project temporarily thwarted by the winter transportation crisis, Goebbels devised a string of regulations calculated to hound and harass the Jews as he had in 1938.²⁶ He ordered one Jew punished for using coffee rations given him by a non-Jew.²⁷ He forbade Jews to use public transport at all, apart from those still working in the munitions factories.²⁸ He prohibited Jews from ordering newspapers by mail, from buying them at kiosks, and from having them delivered.²⁹

After lunching with Hitler in February Goebbels dictated: 'The Führer once again expresses his ruthless resolve to make a clean sweep of the Jews out of Europe. One can't go getting all sentimental about it. The Jews have richly deserved the catastrophe they are suffering today. . . . We have to accelerate this process with a studied ruthlessness and we are thereby doing an invaluable service to a long-suffering mankind tormented for millennia by the Jews.' Hitler, he claimed, had ordered him to convert those who were still in 'two minds about this. 'The major prospects opened up by war are recognized by the Führer in all their significance.'

Fueling the raging fires of his own prejudices, Goebbels spent an evening watching *The Dybbuk*, a Polish Yiddish film. 'Its effect is so antisemitic,' he felt, 'that one can only marvel how little the Jews . . . realize what non-Jews find repellent. Watching this film,' he continued, 'one perceives once more that the Jewish race is the most dangerous on earth, and that one must display neither mercy nor softness toward it.'³⁰

It is important, reading entries like this, to recall that Goebbels' diary is not above criticism as a source. It was now dictated each morning to a private secretary, and typed out in triplicate by clerks. It is acceptable as evidence against Goebbels, but not necessarily against third parties. A distinction must be drawn therefore between what he admits putting to his Führer, and what he alleges the Führer put to him.

Hitler was even now less radical on the Jewish problem than Goebbels, Himmler, Heydrich, and Speer. He was prevaricating; according to Eichmann, he saw the real Final Solution in the Jewish colonization of Madagascar.³¹ But Goebbels was powered by the unflickering light of an unwavering, ineradicable antisemitism. Hearing of an outcry in London against Jewish spivs and black marketeers he gloated: 'The Jews are the same all the world over. You either have to slap a Yellow Star on them, or throw them into a concentration camp, or shoot them.'³² On March 5 he received a report from Heydrich about guerrilla warfare in the occupied east, and blamed this on the Jews too. 'It is therefore understandable,' he dictated to Otte, 'that many of them must pay with their lives for this. Anyway, in my view the more Jews who are liquidated the more

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consolidated the situation in Europe will be after the war. Let there be no phony sentimentalism about it. The Jews are Europe's misfortune. They must somehow be eliminated otherwise we are in danger of being eliminated by them.³³

March 6

On the following day he took note of an extensive report prepared by Heydrich's office, probably on the Wannsee conference.³⁴ There were still eleven million Jews in Europe, he dictated, summarizing the document. 'For the time being they are to be concentrated in the east [until] later; possibly an island like Madagascar can be assigned to them after the war.' 'Undoubtedly there will be a multitude of personal tragedies,' he added firmly. 'But this is unavoidable. The situation now is ripe for a final settlement of the Jewish question.'³⁵ In a covering letter Heydrich invited Goebbels to a second conference, on March 6, Goebbels sent two of his senior staff.³⁶ Eichmann talked crudely at this meeting of 'forwarding' the Jews to the east, like so many head of cattle.³⁷ The ministry of justice handled the report on this new discussion like a hot potato.³⁸ The Reich Chancellery referred it all to Hitler.³⁹ Hitler wearily told Hans Lammers that he wanted the solution of the Jewish problem postponed until after the war was over—a ruling that remarkably few historians now seem disposed to quote.⁴⁰

March 27

By now the two-month railroad log-jam was over and another train was being loaded with Berlin Jews marked for deportation. What might be their fate? On March 27, the day before this trainload left Berlin, Goebbels dictated an extraordinary, deadpan but spine-chilling entry into his diary which confirmed that he at least was now in little doubt.

Beginning with Lublin the Jews are now being deported eastward from the Government-General. The procedure is pretty barbaric, and one that beggars description, and there's not much left of the Jews. Broadly speaking one can probably say that sixty percent of them will have to be liquidated [a word whose use he had of course banned], while only forty percent can be put to work.

'The former gauleiter of Vienna,' he continued, referring to S.S. Brigadeführer Odilo Globocnik, S.S. and police chief of the Lublin District, 'who is carrying out this operation, is doing so pretty discreetly and also using a procedure that is not too flagrant.'⁴¹ The Jews had had it coming to them for a long time, he added, and cited yet again Hitler's prophecy of 1939, and the need to eschew all mawkish sentimentality. 'It's a life-and-death struggle between the Aryan race and the Jewish bacillus,' he concluded, adopting Hitler's favorite analogy. 'Here too,' he dictated to his poker-faced stenographer, 'the Führer is the staunch champion and promoter of a radical solution.'⁴²

Nowhere do the diary's seventy-five thousand pages refer to an explicit order by Hitler for the murder of the Jews. (Perhaps this is not surprising, but for the sake of completeness it needs saying.) Goebbels instinctively fashioned every phrase of those diaries with both cunning and ambiguity. The documents clearly show Hitler as the uncompromising architect of

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the callous plan to shunt all Europe's Jews out, failing Madagascar, to the east. The Polish ghettos emptied by this process would be replenished with Jews deported from the Reich. 'The Jews,' wrote Goebbels, 'have nothing to laugh about.'⁴³ They were having to pay dearly for the misdeeds of their brethren in Britain and America: Such was his rationale. On March 28 he stipulated that they were no longer to be listed in telephone directories.⁴⁴ Why should they be? They were disappearing from the face of occupied Europe.

March 28

HE can deceive his diary, dictating touching entries calculated to portray their author to posterity as a caring family man; but he cannot deceive his own mother. Sometimes she is seen haunting the opulent halls and galleries at No. 20 Hermann-Göring Strasse laughing softly to herself as though she cannot believe that the frenetic demon controlling this evil empire is little Jupp, her youngest son, the waiflike cripple she nursed through infancy. She barely speaks to others, and when she does her thick Rhineland dialect comes as a shock to them.⁴⁵

Once again, pleading problems with her heart, Magda leaves him for a month-long cure in Dresden beginning on January 21.⁴⁶ Sometimes he goes over to see his favorite sister Maria, or to talk things over with his mother. They tell him home truths about public attitudes.⁴⁷ He takes his two eldest daughters and sleepy little Hellmut out to Lanke. It is his first visit there in three months, and the lovely Ursula Quandt stands in for Magda.⁴⁸ He lets the children play truant on the pretext that their younger sisters at Schwanenwerder have whooping cough. They spend happy hours sledding in the snow—the same snow which is shrouding Europe and wreaking havoc on his Jewish evacuation timetable.⁴⁹ On the last day of April he moves out to Lanke in a vain attempt to cure a bout of eczema, a chronic health problem.⁵⁰

Jan 21

One evening he is visited here by a ghost from the past, Anka Stalherm, now forty-six, editor of *Dame* and without even a trace of gray defiling her blonde hair. Her second husband Rudolf Oswald, fifteen years her junior, has just been killed on the eastern front. She mentions that there are still some (Jewish) Ullstein hold-outs left at her magazine's publisher, Deutscher Verlag. Goebbels promises to clear them out, but all the quivering, painful tendresse of their earlier relationship has faded and gone away.⁵¹

HE believed that the winter's crisis had now passed its lowest point.⁵² Morale had been depressed all winter by the epidemics of frostbite and typhus ravaging the armies in the east.⁵³ In North Africa Rommel recaptured Benghazi and lunged on toward Tobruk. Goebbels promoted him to a national hero, although the army discouraged all hero-worship of its commanders.⁵⁴

The British prime minister had no such inhibitions. In Churchill, Goebbels recognized that he had met his match. 'A clever speech,' he had written after one Churchill offering a year earlier.⁵⁵ After listening to

another speech by the prime minister in Birmingham he had enviously written, 'He plays on the tear glands, the old crook.' He scoffed at Churchill's clever evasions. 'Thus we sent to Greece a large part of our Army of the Nile,' he said, mimicked the prime minister, 'to meet our obligations. It transpired by chance that the formations to hand all came from New Zealand and Australia...' 'It's always "chance" that finds the British bringing up the rear,' he mocked, spelling out propaganda lines to his staff. 'Chance that they are always on the retreat. By chance they have no share in the bloody casualties. By chance it is the French, the Belgians, and the Dutch who have to bear the brunt of our western offensive. By chance the Norwegians have to cover the British as they flee Norway. And by chance it is the troops of the empire who, since there are no others left, have to do the job now.'⁵⁸ Having said all that, however, he warned against denigrating the British soldier; the British might let others bear the brunt of the fighting, but when cornered they fought like wildcats.⁵⁷

He became obsessed with Churchill. In *Das Reich* he referred to him as 'that old whisky soak' but admitted, 'A chronic whisky drinker is more welcome as Britain's prime minister than a teetotaler.'⁵⁸ He and Hitler devoured the fond if scurrilous book in which Churchill's private secretary described his drinking habits and his custom of dictating to her in pink silk underwear or even in his bath.⁵⁹ With a sure understanding of the public appetite, Goebbels warned his journalists to go easy on these stories and to concentrate more on the prime minister's dysfunctional family circumstances, his dilettante conduct of the war, and his monstrous lies.⁶⁰

One conclusion was inescapable: Though Churchill might be a 'conceited ape,' they had no choice but to tackle this 'lying old swine,' he was 'a bulldog who may yet give us a run for our money.'⁶¹ 'He's going to be a tough nut for us to crack,' he added a few days later. 'Without him, the war would have been over long ago. But *with* him, there's going to be some hard fighting ahead.'⁶² Studying Churchill's book of pre-war speeches, *Step by Step*, he decided that this implacable foe combined a rare amalgam of heroism and animal cunning. 'If he had come to power in 1933,' he frankly assessed, 'we wouldn't be where we are today.'⁶³ Many times he discussed Churchill with his Führer. 'He will end by reducing the empire to ruin,' predicted Hitler.⁶⁴ He said that all his pre-war English visitors, including Neville Chamberlain, had described Churchill as a fool. 'The Führer naturally regrets very much the knocks that the White man is taking in the Far East,' recorded the propaganda minister. 'But these are no fault of ours.'⁶⁵

Those were dramatic days. As Hitler met him for lunch on February 13 three of the mightiest Nazi warships were plowing in broad daylight eastward through the narrow, wintry straits of Dover under Churchill's very nose; it was one of the most audacious naval operations ever staged. At the same time the Japanese were bearing down on Singapore. Goebbels mocked that the same British who had been unwilling to allow Danzig

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to return to Germany now seemed happy to give up Singapore.⁶⁶ He told his editors to feign regret—and to remind the British that it was they who had wanted this war.⁶⁷ As Singapore raised the white flag, Goebbels added that they should remind readers of the coruscating rebukes that Churchill had heaped upon his Belgian, Dutch, and French allies for surrendering in 1940.⁶⁸

His 1942 birthday address to Hitler displayed a worshipfulness of an almost religious fervor. It revived the image of the 'lonely Führer,' to which he added a soupçon of the 'suffering Führer' and a Christ who suffered only for the Germans.⁶⁹ Nowhere did the diary reflect this more clearly than after a visit to Hitler's HQ in March. 'The Führer, thank God,' he routinely began, 'appears to be in good health.' But then, after more in this gushing vein, he dictated: 'Actually that is not the case. In our intimate talk he told me that recently he has not been very well. From time to time he has had to fight off severe attacks of giddiness.' And finally that day, forty pages later, 'The Führer makes an unnerving impression on me this time. I have never seen him so grim as now. I tell him that I, too, am not at all in the best of health. We continued this discussion very intimately, man to man.'⁷⁰ He said that Hitler had urged him to visit again soon, but over five weeks would pass before the one malade-imaginaire again set eyes on the other.

Using guarded language, Dr Goebbels had put in a word for his imprisoned colleague Karl Bömer. Hitler agreed to Bömer's immediate release and posting to a punishment battalion. Haggard from his ten months in jail, the former department head was brought into the ministry building a few days later; Goebbels gave him money and a food package, and sent him off on four weeks' leave in Bavaria before his posting to the front.⁷¹ Bömer was wounded in action at Kharkov a few weeks later and died in hospital at Kraków. Goebbels and Dietrich jointly signed a defiantly prominent obituary in the party's gazette.⁷²

To his Italian colleagues Goebbels expressed only a qualified optimism about the future. He would personally be content if they reached the Caucasus.⁷³ Hitler had told him that he was setting himself clear but limited objectives for the coming offensives—Leningrad, Moscow, and the Caucasus. In October, he promised, he would call a halt for the winter and perhaps even for good. He did not stint his praise for the Soviet leadership. 'Stalin's brutal hand saved the Russian front,' Goebbels heard Hitler say. 'We shall have to adopt similar methods.'⁷⁴

THE next day, March 20, Gutterer brought to him an extraordinary story. He had just lunched at the Kaiserhof with Professor Otto Hahn, who had discovered nuclear fission in 1938; Hahn hinted at the work that he and Professor Werner Heisenberg were doing on the atomic bomb. 'If we had such a weapon,' Hahn said, 'everybody else would throw in the towel right away!' Gutterer brought him straight round to Goebbels at No. 20 Hermann-Göring Strasse. Goebbels asked how long it would take to build such a weapon. Hahn spoke of the autumn of 1945, but added

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that he was hampered since Rust, the minister of education, had sacked his best physicist Lisa Meitner (she was Jewish); Goebbels loathed Rust, and exploded in fury; he asked if Meitner could be retrieved—he would guarantee that she would be under Hitler's personal protection and be given a fine estate if they developed the bomb. (She was already in England however.)⁷⁵ Quoting Otto Hahn, Goebbels told his diary that a tiny device would yield such immense destructive power that 'one is forced to view with dread the shape of this war, and indeed of all future wars, if it drags on much longer.' It was vital, he noted, to keep the German lead in this field.⁷⁶

After a meeting with the atomic scientists in June Speer reported to Hitler, though in terms of little enthusiasm, and the small German lead was lost.⁷⁷

CONVENTIONAL bombing already seemed destructive enough. On Saturday March 28 Churchill's bombers set medieval Lübeck on fire. Gauleiter Kaufmann told Goebbels that it was unlike any raid that had gone before. When Hitler phoned, raging that he had been unable to raise the ministry of the interior by telephone at all, Goebbels asked for full powers to arrange emergency food and clothing for the city.⁷⁸ He discovered that most of his fellow ministers went missing on Friday evenings. The war department not only shut down every weekend but took off Wednesday afternoons too, as though it were still peacetime.

A few hours before the Lübeck raid, the Jewish exodus from Berlin had resumed after a two-month hiatus.⁷⁹ A train left Berlin that day, March 28, 1942, for Travniki with 974 Jews. Goebbels now ordered a comprehensive film record made.⁸⁰ 'About a thousand a week are now being shipped out to the east,' he dictated. 'The suicide rate among these Jewish evacuees is extremely high,' he added without emotion. 'It's no skin off my nose. The Jews have had it coming to them. . . . They ignored our warnings, and now they're paying for it.'⁸¹ Another train left on April 2 with 654 Berlin Jews, and a third with sixty-five, also bound for Travniki, on April 14. There was then another halt. It would not be easy to get rid of the rest, some forty thousand, because under the current regulations only complete families could be deported: if even one member was exempt, so was the whole family.⁸² Controversy was rife about what to do with the half-Jews—sterilize them, or deport with all that that implied? 'There is no doubt,' Goebbels conceded, 'that these do pose a serious obstacle to the radical solution of the Jewish problem.'⁸³

The partisan war provided both camouflage and rationale for the massacres. Among the thousands of victims of the partisan fighters was Tonak, Goebbels' trusty former chauffeur. He was gunned down and buried in swamplands west of R'zhev.⁸⁴ 'The Jews get short shrift in all the occupied territories,' Goebbels dictated after reading the latest S.D. report on the partisan war. 'Tens of thousands are being wiped out.' He never tired of repeating Hitler's sinister 1939 prophecy, and did so again.⁸⁵ From Moscow came reports on a Jewish congress uttering bloodthirsty

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threats of retribution once Hitler was overthrown. 'But that cannot be,' dictated Goebbels. 'That must not be, and that shall not be.'⁸⁶

Fears for his own safety were never far from his mind. He saw every living Jew as a potential assassin. Nine-tenths of the assassinations in Paris were being committed by Jews, which was, he conceded, hardly surprising under the circumstances. 'It would be best either to deport the remaining yids from Paris, or to liquidate the lot.'⁸⁷ He was planning an elaborate public trial of Herschel Grynszpan, who had fallen into Nazi hands in 1940, but the assassin's crafty lawyers had now floated the theory that he and his victim Rath had been homosexual lovers.⁸⁸ This was potential dynamite for the enemy propaganda. Before Goebbels could stop it, the minister of justice included this infamous allegation in the court papers and, worse, ruled that the trial should allow public discussion of the deportation of the Jews—a development which Goebbels found 'incredibly inept.'⁸⁹ Thus the Grynszpan affair turned to ashes in his hands. Leopold Gutterer reviewed the dossier and advised Goebbels to drop the prosecution entirely.⁹⁰

Grynszpan's trial was put on ice; indeed, he survived the war. Gutterer was told he had sat at the back of a Hamburg court-room in the fifties when he himself was on trial. This was one of the ultimate ironies of the Final Solution which the young Jew's pistol shots in 1938 had helped to unleash.

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45: At any Price

TOURING Austria's principal cities in 1942 to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the Anschluss Goebbels launched a new slogan, 'Victory at any price.'¹ A quarter of a million troops had already died in Barbarossa. British air raids and reduced food rations were eroding public morale.² Goebbels ordered propaganda onslaughts on the enemies within: He listed black marketeering, excessive paperwork, and—an eternal quest—the surliness of public servants like waiters, transport workers, and post office clerks.³ Oblivious of the double standards involved, he persuaded Hitler and Bormann to crack down on the sybaritic lifestyle of top Nazis.⁴ He then privately authorized the party's acquisition and total renovation of a château in his native Rheydt for his exclusive use.⁵ He generously started public collections of textiles and mosquito nets for the eastern front.⁶ To the former he contributed a suit, Magda her riding breeches—Hanke had now galloped out of her life—and Harald his Hitler Youth uniform; they also gave raincoats, trenchcoats, and gabardine coats, as well as two silk dresses, a long evening dress, and a nurse's cloak.⁷

Hitler had repeatedly ordered the church problem postponed, like the Jewish problem, until the war was over. Disregarding him, the party's 'radicalinsks,' as Goebbels called them, confiscated several church buildings in Berlin.⁸ Hitler reassured him that once this war was over he too would give no quarter to the clergy who were acting in such a 'vile' way while Germany's soldiers were fighting for their lives. The moment his hands were free he would settle this mutinous clergy's hash, once and for all. Goebbels looked forward to this new battle as one of the great ideological conflicts of all time.⁹

Death and destruction continued to come from the heavens over Germany. Goebbels had believed that the Lübeck raid was just a fluke, but he was mistaken. After a puny raid on Cologne led him to remark that that was all the British were now capable of, on April 23 they began a series of four fire raids on Rostock.¹⁰ It seemed that shutting down their evening broadcast had not hampered the British navigators at all. Even so Goebbels was unwilling to resume broadcasts, fearing that Göring would make him a scapegoat for the next catastrophe.¹¹ Hitler told him that he was ordering reprisal raids against historic British towns like Bath. Goebbels hoped for propaganda profit from wiping out these 'cultural

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centers, watering holes, and middle-class towns,' or as he called it, 'Answering terror with terror.'¹²

Sensing that these fire raids had inclined Hitler toward radical solutions, Goebbels felt it a propitious moment to mention the Berlin Jews again. Hitler reiterated his stand-point. 'He wants to force the Jews right out of Europe,' dictated Goebbels. 'The Jews have inflicted such suffering on our continent that the harshest punishment . . . is still too mild.'¹³

FOR most of May 1942 he lingered out at Lanke fighting his eczema. Leopold Gutterer chaired the ministerial conferences in his absence. Returning with his affliction still uncured he heard that unknown assassins had maimed Heydrich in Prague. This episode triggered further antisemitic impulses in Goebbels, who was already concerned for his own security (he had years before remarked to journalists that if there was one word they had to shun as the Devil shunned Holy Water it was surely 'assassination'). It cheered him when his old comrade Kurt Daluege, standing in for the mortally wounded Heydrich in Prague, had a thousand intellectuals shot. 'Assassinations can set a bad example if we don't act ruthlessly against them,' noted Goebbels, and he took harsh action against the remaining Jews in Berlin, ordering the arrest of five hundred and notifying their community that he would have one hundred shot for every Jewish act of sabotage or murder, though his authority to do this seems obscure.¹⁴ 'I have no desire,' he explained in his diary, 'to have a bullet pumped into my belly by some twenty-two-year-old yid from the east. Give me ten Jews in a concentration camp, or under the sod, to one at large any day.'¹⁵

The fate awaiting the deportees was evidently swift and deadly. Only nine days after one round-up, that on May 27, the Berlin Gestapo was already writing to the tax authorities attaching a list of 'those who have since died' and the assets they had declared.¹⁶ Lunching with Hitler on May 29 Goebbels persuaded him to instruct Speer, now munitions minister, to have Jewish munitions workers replaced by foreigners. That would remove the exemption from deportation on hundreds of Jewish families. Implying that he was well aware of the ultimate fate of the evacuees Goebbels dictated that he saw a major danger in having forty thousand Jews 'with nothing more to lose' running loose in the Reich capital. He incidentally also advised Hitler to liquidate Berlin's prison population while he could. 'We have lost so many idealists in this war,' echoed Goebbels, thinking of Tonak, 'that we have to exact a like measure from the negative criminal fraternity.'¹⁷ Hitler agreed with him that it would be a mistake to evacuate Jews to Siberia—the spartan life there would turn them back into a virulent breed. 'That's why he would prefer them to be settled in Central Africa,' recorded Goebbels. 'There they'll be living in a climate which definitely won't make them tough and resilient.' 'At any rate,' he concluded, 'it's the Führer's aim to rid western Europe of the Jews entirely.'¹⁸

Too many Jews were already hearing rumors from the B.B.C. and other

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sources about the fate awaiting them. Goebbels learned in January 1942 that Germany's radio-monitoring agencies, and particularly the foreign ministry's Seehaus service were distributing their defeatist digests throughout official Berlin; 180 copies were going to Ribbentrop's ministry alone.¹⁹ Hitler gave him immediate powers to prune the lists of recipients. Soon afterward he was granted high-level access to the top-secret signals-intelligence and intercept digests prepared by Göring's Forschungsamt.²⁰ Goebbels expressed an interest only in those 'brown pages' bearing upon foreign policy; although the Reichsmarschall usually limited distribution of these intercepts on a strictly need-to-know basis, he humored this curiosity and Goebbels' liaison officer Dr Severitt brought, in his locked dispatch box, sheaves of reports such as on Molotov's secret deals with the British government in May.²¹

STALIN was fighting with his back to the wall; he needed the Allies. The pendulum was swinging back in Hitler's favor. The Germans were fighting a gigantic tank battle at Kharkov. The Kerch peninsula was back in their hands. They sank a million tons of Allied shipping during May 1942, and in the following month, Hitler told Goebbels on May 22, they would commission one and a half times as many new submarines as were currently at sea. Rommel took Tobruk. When Hitler came to Berlin on May 28 to speak at the Sport Palace, he told Goebbels that he now intended to cut off the Caucasus, thus crushing the Soviet Adam's apple.²²

Over Germany, an unnatural calm prevailed at night. Where were Churchill's bombers? Goebbels suggested to his department heads that the British were bluffing to forestall Stalin's demands for a second front.²³ Hitler attributed the lull to Britain's dismay at his reprisal raids. The lull ended late on Saturday May 30, 1942. The British bombers returned in unprecedented force, attacking Cologne. Goebbels was at first blissfully unaware and Hitler's adjutant failed to track him down—or any other minister; Hitler reached Gutterer through the ministry switchboard and told him to start relief operations. Suspecting that Goebbels was illicitly engaged, Gutterer phoned Hermann-Göring Strasse and left a discreet message for him to call him urgently 'whenever he got back.' After directing Hermann Schäfer, their electrical wizard, to take the Reich Motor Convoy (Reichsautozug) from Munich to Cologne with its powerful mobile generators, kitchens, bakeries, and mobile hospital, Gutterer summoned a ten A.M. conference with the other ministries in Goebbels' appropriately named Pompeii Room.²⁴

A disaster had hit Cologne. The gauleiter was calling it the heaviest raid ever. Churchill was talking of a 'thousand-bomber' raid, the German air staff of seventy bombers (of which they claimed to have shot down forty); while Goebbels assumed that Churchill was exaggerating a bit, he felt that seventy was far too low.²⁵ Massive retaliation was out of the question, as the Luftwaffe had its main weight on the eastern front. Hitler struck at Canterbury, but had only seventy bombers for the purpose. An unseemly propaganda war developed. The American press spoke of an

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earthquake hitting Cologne, and inflated the casualties—they claimed sixty thousand dead (the real figure was 474).²⁶ Significantly changing his tactics, Goebbels authorized live radio interviews with survivors like those broadcast by the B.B.C. at the height of the Nazi blitz.²⁷

His shortwave broadcasts to North America linked these 'terror raids' to the Jewish problem, accusing Roosevelt's 'propaganda kikes' of 'yiddling' while Cologne burned.²⁸ He did not underestimate the Americans' propaganda; he particularly feared their seductive theme that the Allies were fighting the Nazis, and not the German people. If the British had struck this chord, he admitted to his staff, it could have been fatal.²⁹ His best hope was to drive a wedge between London and Washington, as once he had done between London and Paris.³⁰ In broadcasts to American audiences he portrayed the British as bunglers who existed only at Stalin's caprice; then he told the British to beware the rapacious, empire-stealing Americans. He depicted the United States as disaster-prone and 'too weak' to be of real assistance.³¹ These unsophisticated messages worked. 'One only has to read the [American] newspapers,' Roosevelt was informed, 'or ride in a bus or visit his [sic] club, bar, or coffee shop.'³² Goebbels put it about that their ethnic cousins, the German-Americans in the United States, were being forced to wear yellow armbands: and thus the vicious circle was completed.³³ He coined the phrase Roosevelt's War, and began putting it about that the president was mentally ill, like Woodrow Wilson before him.³⁴

He now controlled a Radio Free America ostensibly run by 'independent Americans' in Europe. Early in July 1942 Goebbels closed down four of the other ten black transmitters; among those remaining on the air were the New British Broadcasting Station (starring William Joyce), a Voice of Free Arabs, and the Russian-language station directed by ex-communist Albrecht. Goebbels had also set up a Voice of Free India as a vehicle for the Indian nationalist Subhas Chandra Bose, a former mayor of Calcutta whom he interviewed in July.³⁵ The bamboo rod, he ordered, must become a symbol of British rule in India 'like the police truncheon in the *System* era [i.e. the Weimar Republic] in Germany.'³⁶

As Churchill traveled to Washington Goebbels asked his editors to comment on the prime minister's habit of fleeing abroad each time things went wrong. 'Tobruk,' he wrote, as Rommel captured the strategic North African port, 'is our revenge for Cologne.' While Britain's drunken dilettante was squandering his bombers on civilian targets, she was losing vital battles elsewhere through lack of air power. 'Churchill is victorious in Parliament,' he mocked after the British prime minister survived another vote of confidence in July 1942: 'But Germany wins the wars.'³⁷

This did not however include the guerrilla war. When Heydrich died of his injuries, the Nazis liquidated the Czech village which they alleged had harbored his assassins.³⁸ The Czechs as a whole had condemned the murder, and when Gauleiter Baldur von Schirach talked loosely of ridding Vienna of its Czech minority Bormann reminded all the gauleiters, including Goebbels, that Hitler had forbidden any such measures.³⁹

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There were other gaffes. In France S.S. Brigadeführer Carl Oberg announced plans to execute all the male kinsfolk of assassins: their women would be sent to hard labor, and their children to orphanages. Goebbels said that Oberg's proposals violated every propaganda principle. The inclusion of women and children was a gift to the enemy, he said; and hostages should always be taken from the same band of the political spectrum as the culprits.⁴⁰

He attributed the ominous growth of partisan warfare in Russia to the absence of any coherent *Ostpolitik*.⁴¹ Earlier in 1942 he had issued guidelines on how to win over all the occupied populations.⁴² Russian prisoners were unanimous under Nazi interrogation that they 'preferred to die on their feet than to live on their knees'—a brilliant slogan coined by Stalin himself.⁴³ To Hitler Goebbels hinted that they should set up puppet governments in the Ukraine and Baltic states.⁴⁴ 'You can't rule Russia from Berlin,' he said, criticizing Rosenberg.⁴⁵ He felt the latter was impractical, naïve, and hopeless at organization.⁴⁶ He drafted a decree guaranteeing religious freedom to the Russians, and determined to secure Hitler's approval the next time they met.⁴⁷ He felt sure that Hitler was being kept in the dark about the partisan war. From all quarters he was urged to take it up with him.⁴⁸ He sent Walter Tiessler to point out to Rosenberg once again that their enemy was bolshevism, not Russia as such. Rosenberg ducked the issue, and the infighting went on.⁴⁹

Another problem was that German visitors to Russia, like the arch-ecologists that Rosenberg had recently sent, were finding things there less primitive than Goebbels had painted.⁵⁰ The Germans were learning that the Russians too were capable of fighting and dying for a cause. Russian commanders outnumbered in the fighting for Sevastopol had chosen to blow up their entire position rather than surrender. Knowing the German weakness for heroic idols, Goebbels suppressed all such reports. 'National Socialism,' he lectured to his staff, 'teaches that bolshevism is not an ideology, but the effluence of sub-human, criminal, and Jewish instincts.' He could never forget that five million former communist voters lived in their midst: The disease was only in remission; it had not been extinguished. The sewer rat, he said, reverting to customary Nazi imagery, would always prove more hardy than the domestic pet. Thus their reporting must distinguish between the heroism of the German soldier and the animal survival-instinct of the Russians.⁵¹ He wrote an essay on this problem for *Das Reich* and circulated it throughout the party. 'The superior race will triumph over the inferior one,' he asserted, 'no matter what infernal means the latter may use to escape its personal fate.'⁵²

BRITAIN's fortunes were now at their lowest ebb. As Rommel's exhausted Axis armies dug in at El Alamein, Goebbels' propaganda blared promises of independence to the Egyptians. On the high seas Hitler's submarines had sunk seven hundred thousand tons of shipping during June. In the first days of July his submarines and bombers in the Arctic mauled the

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Russia-bound Anglo-American convoy PQ.17 so badly that the next convoy-run was abandoned.

Stalin, speculated Goebbels, must be furious about Churchill's failure. Perhaps he would one day be willing to come to terms. Germany would certainly not reject any overtures.⁵³ From his close study of Soviet newsreels he concluded that Stalin was a quiet, dogged type; head and shoulders above the pigmies of the western democracies. 'That man has style,' he said.⁵⁴ Moscow's clamor for a Second Front—a British invasion of the Continent—grew throughout July.⁵⁵ On the twenty-third Goebbels warned his staff that given Churchill's 'unstable' character an invasion in the west was quite probable.⁵⁶ German propaganda had, he pointed out, no interest in provoking such an event; on the contrary, they must do all they could to help Churchill represent his air raids as a viable substitute for a Second Front.⁵⁷ He dealt with such an invasion in a *Reich* article on August 2, entitled 'Don't even try it.' Its sardonic tone almost violated his own guidelines: 'We extend to the British a hearty invitation to come over,' he taunted. 'We hope they'll bring a few Americans along too. . . .'⁵⁸

Churchill hurried to Moscow. Goebbels ordered the Nazi media to dwell on every detail of the prime minister's humiliation—for example, that Stalin did not even bother to meet him at the airport.⁵⁹

Hitler had meanwhile shifted his summer HQ to Vinnitsa in the Ukraine. In mid-August he asked Goebbels to fly down to discuss the domestic situation 'and foreign policy,' as the minister noted. 'He also intends to give me special powers to take over civil defense.'⁶⁰ He had spent several days touring the blitzed cities.⁶¹ As his plane landed at Vinnitsa on August 19 events in France were taking a dramatic turn. Two brigades of Canadian troops were storming the beaches on either side of Dieppe. By midday the landing force had been all but wiped out.⁶² Hitler told Goebbels the next day what had happened. A German Channel convoy had stumbled on the invasion force. 'Thus,' dictated Goebbels in his diary, 'we had the first report that something was afoot out there in the murk and fog as early as 4:28 A.M.' A German submarine chaser had rammed one landing craft, a second German warship had opened fire on the British motor torpedo-boats. After an exchange of fire at point-blank range which left eleven Germans dead and ten missing, the British raid developed into a debacle. The raiding force lost one destroyer, thirty-three landing craft, 106 planes, and 4,350 men (including 1,179 dead). London claimed that the raid was merely an 'exercise with live ammunition.' Goebbels dismissed this: 'Obviously the British planned to execute a major operation here,' he wrote. 'At very least they tried to bring about a Second Front . . . thereby complying with Stalin's orders. There can be no doubt about that.' Nor even Churchill, he argued, would have sacrificed all those planes, destroyers, and troop transports, not to mention three thousand dead and missing men, for a mere exercise.⁶³ 'All of a sudden,' he scoffed the next day, 'the British are declaring that everything went just the way it was planned. From the fact that it was all over in nine hours they are now implying

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that it was in fact only *planned* to last nine hours.⁶⁴ He noted with glee that Churchill had ordered a strict clamp-down on quoting the American newspaper reports on the fiasco. 'The reality is,' he commented, 'that he is the prisoner of the Kremlin. He can no longer conform to the dictates of common sense. He has to act at the Soviet behest.'⁶⁵

In glorious sunshine he left Hitler's HQ and drove back to the airfield, past rolling cornfields lush with the new Ukrainian harvest. If only they could transport it all back home, he sighed. The previous day's *Völkischer Beobachter* had carried a foolish article by Erich Koch, the local dictator, boasting of the agricultural riches now flowing to the Reich. As soon as he got back to his ministry, Goebbels warned against propagating such false illusions.⁶⁶

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46: The Road to Stalingrad

GERMANY had now been at war for three years. Her public's brittle morale was troubling Goebbels and he drafted an article on 'The point of war,' reviewing the events since 1939 from a lofty ideological plane.¹ British leaflets were becoming more insidious, particularly one appealing, 'Get rid of Hitler!'² The message seemed unthinkable, but within the four walls of No. 20 Hermann-Göring Strasse even Goebbels began to express reservations about some of Hitler's decisions. Once he stepped out through the padded double-doors and into his morning ministerial conference, however, he radiated unswerving loyalty to his Führer.³

He had recently issued a circular to journalists discouraging inflated terms like 'unique' or 'historic' to describe their victories, and words like 'warlord' for anybody other than Hitler.⁴ Morale improved as Hitler's armies fanned out to the south and east across the shimmering, dusty Russian steppe, and Goebbels methodically warned the media against overweening optimism.⁵ They captured the oil cities of Maykop and Kraznodar; the Russian population rose against them under the influence of Moscow's propaganda and, as the High Command chided Goebbels, with no visible effect from his. Hitler repeatedly warned him to damp down any spreading optimism.⁶ He ordered General Friedrich Paulus to advance with the Sixth Army on Stalingrad, a city of two million souls dominating the Volga waterway.

The Russian summer's heat was as savage as the late winter's cold. The temperature soared to near 50°C. On August 8 Goebbels dictated: 'The battle of Stalingrad has begun.' As Marshal Timoshenko withdrew before Hitler's tank onslaught, Stalin ordered him to stand and fight. Goebbels compared this harshly worded order approvingly with Hitler's order of December 1941. 'You can see,' he dictated, warming once more to the Soviet leader, 'that in Stalin we are dealing with a man of caliber.'⁷

As Soviet resistance at Stalingrad stiffened, so did Goebbels' instinctive reluctance to mention the city's name. He had not forgotten Otto Dietrich's blunder of October 1941. From late in August onward he repeatedly embargoed all reference to the battle. Nobody could say how long it would last. But already Stalingrad was on every tongue, both friend and foe.⁸

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FOR a week he vanished from Germany, visiting Venice again for the biennial film festival.

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Before leaving he wrote for *Das Reich* an article entitled 'Don't be so righteous,' a critique of the Germans' pedantic sense of justice and over-objectivity. 'We're so frightened of doing an injustice to somebody,' he wrote, 'that when in doubt we prefer that the injustice be done to ourselves. . . . Hating is something we Germans still have to learn.' Too much objectivity, he concluded, would be the death of them.⁹ He repeated this attack in a secret address delivered to about sixty senior Berlin journalists in the ministry's Throne Room on September 23. He warned against harboring any illusions about victory. They must not underestimate their enemy. 'The German public is not as hardy as the British,' he pointed out. Britain had yet to lose a single war. 'The German public,' he repeated, 'suffers from a craving for righteousness and from a craze for objectivity. It keeps looking for the laudable in our enemies.' Their chronic love-affair with Churchill was just one example.¹⁰ If he were English, he said, he would have kept repeating ever since 1939 that they were fighting Hitler, and not the Germans; he would also have hammered home *ad nauseam* the eight points of the Atlantic Charter. He warned them that their biggest problem in coming months would be the resumption of the British air raids. Single-line references to enemy air activity in the High Command communiqués would no longer suffice. He set up propaganda companies with no other task than to dramatize the coming blitz and the heroism of the people.¹¹

IN this secret speech to Berlin's top journalists, Goebbels was astonishingly frank about the fate of Berlin's Jews. Justifying the reporting restrictions imposed, he explained that every ill-considered sentence was liable to be reported abroad by the Jews. 'This conduct of the Jews is understandable enough,' he added, according to the transcript. 'In Berlin there are still forty-eight thousand of them.¹² They know with deadly certainty that in the course of this war they will be deported to the east and left to their murderous fate. They can already sense the inexorable tread of physical annihilation and therefore, so long as they live, they inflict damage on the Reich whenever they can.'¹³

Small wonder that the world's Jews mobilized against Nazi Germany. In London, rabbis rallied to the slogan, 'England awake!' Goebbels derided this as a plagiarism of the Nazis' own rallying-call.¹⁴ In Jerusalem, Jews at the Wailing Wall placed an ancient curse on him. 'I have yet to observe any untoward effects,' he noted.¹⁵

His humor was ill-chosen. The deportations from Berlin had resumed. To silence public disquiet Goebbels ordered the bourgeois press to feature reports on hostile Jewish activities abroad.¹⁶ Trainloads of elderly Jews had begun leaving Berlin in June for Theresienstadt, the model camp for

* The Germans cheered Churchill when he drove through the ruins of Berlin in 1945, and the city of Aachen later awarded him the Charlemagne prize.

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'old folks.' On July 11 the first trainload bound for Auschwitz left Berlin with 210 Jews aboard.¹⁷ In mid-August Berlin packed off 1,004 more Jews to Riga, followed by 790 on September 5; on the twenty-sixth 811 would be shipped to Reval. That day he noted that all Jews were to be excluded from fats and meat rations, except those still working in the munitions industry who would receive *only* the heavy-labor supplements.¹⁸ (The actual regulations were even more pitiless than his diary suggested: Meat *and* bread rations were canceled for all Jews other than those married to non-Jews or wounded in World War One; further, no Jews were to receive milk except infants, an interesting detail; any food packets received from abroad were to be deducted from Jews' ration cards; gifts of tea and coffee were to be confiscated and distributed to field hospitals.)¹⁹

Seventeen thousand Jews working in industry were still exempt from deportation. According to Goebbels' diary, Hitler agreed with his venomous comments on how their intellectuals and economists were everywhere discovering 'indispensable' Jewish skilled workers who just had to be spared.²⁰ In Goebbels' view, since they now had 240,000 foreign workers in Berlin it should not be too hard to replace the exempt Jews too.²¹ Two more trainloads of Jews left Berlin in October carrying 963 Jews to Riga and 791 more vaguely—and with sinister connotations—simply to 'the east.'

Despite all this the level hardly seemed to decline. He found out that many of Berlin's judges were half-Jews transferred from other cities in the belief that they would stand out less in Berlin. 'Berlin is not a garbage tip,' he exclaimed.²² In a letter to the new minister of justice Otto Thierack he proposed simply declaring all Jews 'unconditionally disposable'—the word he used, *ausrottbar*, also has ugly connotations—and commended to him 'the concept of annihilation through work.'²³ Thierack however was unexpectedly unsympathetic. Some, he pointed out, were half-Jews whose sons had already died in this war. 'So long as the Führer won't allow us to address the broader issue of those with Jewish blood or in-laws,' Thierack said, 'we can't carry out an *Aktion* confined to the legal system.'²⁴ At a meeting chaired by Eichmann that month the civil servants became bogged down in bureaucratic minutiae.²⁵ Frustrated, Goebbels said that he was sure that Berlin's Jews were helping the British bomber crews to find their targets (they weren't). He set himself a new target—to rid Berlin of its remaining Jews by March 1943.²⁶

Ugly rumors were already circulating abroad, fueled by British propaganda. The *Daily Telegraph* quoted Polish claims that seven thousand of Warsaw's Jews were being killed each day, often in what it called 'gas chambers;' one of Goebbels' worried civil servants telexed a request for information to Hans Frank's press office in Kraków and to the propaganda field office in Warsaw. The reassuring reply spoke of the Jews being used to construct defenses and roads. Be that as it may, in Goebbels' files the original press report, which had merely summarized the British

newspaper item, was rubber-stamped *Geheime Reichssache*, top state secret.²⁷

How much did Goebbels know? In his surviving files there is plenty that implies a broad general knowledge of the atrocities. Reporting back to him on November 11, his legal expert Dr Hans Schmidt-Leonhardt, whom he had sent to inspect conditions in Hans Frank's Polish dominions, noted that the Warsaw police had deemed it too dangerous to visit the ghetto there; in the Kraków ghetto he had found all the Jews put to work; in Lublin the ghetto had already been cleared away, and there were now bloody disturbances. 'As a *Geheime Reichssache*,' dictated the lawyer, 'Frank related to us the following characteristic recent instance:—' But whatever it was we cannot know, as Goebbels' shocked staff cut off the rest of the page that is filed in his ministry's records.²⁸

In February 1943 Dr Fritz Prause, a senior staff member, briefed Goebbels on the continued terrorist incidents resulting from their occupation policies—the Germans had begun rounding up Poles in cinemas and churches for slave labor. A poster appealing to 'Poles of German origin' had generated speculation about the likely fate of the rest. 'The rumor is spreading,' Prause reported, 'that the same fate now awaits the Poles as has been meted out to the Jews, and there is not a Pole in the Government-General who does not know precisely what has been done to them.' 'One thing is certain,' recommended Dr Prause: 'That the current derogatory slogan "Pole equals Jew" is no longer viable for the Government-General, particularly since the above-mentioned rumors dwell heavily on what is known to have become of the Jews.'²⁹

The wave of terrorist attacks continued. In the first quarter of 1943 forty-four Germans were assassinated in Warsaw. In April 1943 a local propaganda official reported to Goebbels that the 'resettlement' operations in Lublin—Nazi officialese for something clearly far worse—had left non-Jewish Poles with the definite impression that after the Jews their turn would come next. There were only two alternatives open to the Germans, this brave if circumspect official informed Goebbels: Either to assimilate or to liquidate (*ausrotten*) the Poles. 'Even if for biological reasons the adoption of such radical steps as have for instance been necessary against the Jews can be justified before the bar of history, such a solution still seems unworthy of the tradition of the German people, given that large parts of the population affected are still resident within the Reich's frontiers. The plan of that American Jew to sterilize the male population of the German Reich,' the official reminded Dr Goebbels, referring to Theodore Kaufman, 'was rightly pilloried by the entire German press.'³⁰

In sum it appears that by 1943 members of Goebbels' staff both in Berlin and in the field appreciated that the likely fate of the deported Jews was one about which they should use only the skimpiest Nazi euphemisms.³¹ The camouflage was universal and perfect. Addressing allegations by Dr Stephen F. Wise, president of the American Jewish Congress, Himmler wrote to Gestapo chief Heinrich Müller that he was

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not surprised by such rumors, given the high mortality rate in the camps; he ordered all the cadavers 'of these deceased Jews' cremated or interred.³² During November and December the London newspapers published more reports. Goebbels' own Transocean service secretly forwarded to Himmler a Reuters report of February 14, 1943 alleging that six thousand Jews were being murdered in Poland every day.³³

In mid-December 1942 the B.B.C. concentrated for a whole week on these atrocities, announcing that Poland had become a charnel house, that over one-third of Poland's 3,531,000 Jews had been liquidated, and that the German public was turning a blind eye to the killings; the B.B.C. warned the Germans that they and their children's children would be cast out of the community of nations for all time as punishment.³⁴ Goebbels noted this with irritation in his diary: The Jews were exploiting every known propaganda technique—pathos, impertinence, and solemnity—to rouse the world against Germany; but the Reich still had more than enough Jewish pawns in its hands. 'The British are the Jews of the Aryan race,' he dictated, weightier arguments evidently failing him.³⁵ On December 22 his monitors reported that the B.B.C. had announced that Hitler was planning to complete liquidating the Jews by December 30: 'The Jews are first robbed of their civil rights and their property, then given less to eat than the rest, and finally thrown into concentration camps or deported to unknown destinations.' There were allegations about a camp in Danzig where Jews were executed by electric chair or gas; other propaganda broadcasts spoke of gas chambers and cyanide. Goebbels delegated to the urbane Hans Fritzsche the task of rebutting the stories.³⁶

'In the long run,' he wrote, 'I fear we shall not be able to get away with this by hushing it up. We're going to have to answer something if we are not to get gradually pinned down.' He privately believed that the Allies were actually glad that the Nazis were clearing out the 'Jewish rabble.' Adopting standard tactics, he ordered that no direct response be made to the allegations—they should remind the world about Britain's role in India instead.³⁷

of greater weight in everybody's mind that winter was the unending battle for Stalingrad. It provided fresh ammunition for Goebbels' feud with Otto Dietrich, Hitler's dapper, spineless press chief—two months Goebbels' senior in age, but his equal in Party rank.³⁸ There was open war between them, waged with scarcely less ferocity than the Sixth Army's battle at Stalingrad. While the Machiavellian Goebbels based in Berlin mapped out broad propaganda strategy, Dietrich, resident at Hitler's HQ, issued directives (*Parolen*) to the press which often had the opposite effect. Dietrich found it irksome to be excluded from Hitler's formal conferences with Goebbels, and obnoxious that Goebbels regularly invited newspapermen to his morning conferences. The direct telephone lines from Goebbels' desk to his departmental chiefs including the 'German press' department in Room 24 were a thorn in Dietrich's flesh.

Sept 1942

He posted Helmut Sündermann, an experienced journalist, permanently into Goebbels' ministry as his deputy; to Goebbels, this smelt of the creation of an independent 'press ministry'.³⁹ During the summer of 1942 Hitler banged their heads together; he signed a decree ordering the two men to work in harmony; but he also instructed Goebbels to channel all directives to editors through Dietrich in future.⁴⁰

Sept 15

This left the way open for another Dietrich blunder. On September 15 he announced, 'The struggle for Stalingrad is nearing its triumphant conclusion'—an announcement, he said, was imminent. Some newspapers printed special editions. Headlines announced that Stalingrad was in the bag. Goebbels, more cautiously, warned his staff to strict secrecy. Even he however began his remarks on the eighteenth with the words, 'Now that the capture of Stalingrad is a certainty...' ⁴¹ Then caution returned and he urged editors to find something other than Stalingrad for their headlines—a wise move, because soon the High Command was talking about 'exceptionally stubborn' fighting for the city.⁴²

Goebbels was not encouraged to hear that the *Daily Mail* was calling Stalingrad the decisive battle of the war.⁴³ Blaming Goebbels for this new gaffe, London mocked that he had been rather faster on the draw than the Wehrmacht.⁴⁴ He cursed Dietrich out loud and announced that he would severely punish any editors who blindly issued special editions in future. 'I am, after all, the one with the name to lose,' he said, 'and I have no desire to see this name, which has taken me twenty years to earn, tarnished by thoughtless stunts like this.'⁴⁵

Hitler, like Dietrich, was taken in by his own propaganda. He assured Goebbels that they would capture Stalingrad shortly. He planned to continue the other prong of his eastern campaign, across the Caucasus mountains, all winter, then building a gigantic broad-track railroad from Germany to the new eastern territories.

Together they addressed a huge Sport Palace meeting on the thirtieth. Here Goebbels called for the first time for what he described as total war. 'The more total the war the better,' he said. Developing also his new propaganda line of 'strength through fear' he warned of the consequences of bolshevism but assured this mighty audience that the worst was over. He drew the familiar comparisons with the last months before 1933.⁴⁶ Sitting beside Hitler, Goebbels heard him announce: 'We shall be assaulting Stalingrad, and capturing it too—you can bank on that.' And, thundered Hitler into the microphones, 'You can take it from me, nobody is ever going to shift us from that spot.'

Rommel's position in Egypt also seemed impregnable. The field marshal came to Berlin and stayed for several days at Schwanenwerder, marking up his maps for the Führer and regaling Goebbels with stirring tales of the desert and of the armored gladiators who were disputing its command. Goebbels treated him to all the newsreels issued since Tobruk, and to his first ever glimpse of a color movie, the lavishly produced *Golden City*.⁴⁷

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ALLOWED back into Magda's home at Schwanenwerder for the Rommel visit, Goebbels was happy to see the children again after so long.⁴⁸ His new press expert Rudolf Semler found himself wondering sometimes however whether the minister really did love his children.⁴⁹ He seldom showed them true affection, noticed Semler, and only rarely saw them now. He refused to lower himself to play trains with little Hellmut; now seven, Hellmut's blue-gray eyes often had a vacant look which did not endear him to his father. With his precocious oldest daughters Helga and Hilde the minister either flirted outrageously or tested their intellect to the point of tears. The others he virtually ignored except for photo-calls. 'Our children have inherited your good looks and my brains,' he chaffed Magda once. 'How awful it would have been the other way around.' (He was a connoisseur of Bernard Shaw, from whom the remark originally came.)

His forty-fifth birthday came. Hitler sent him a handwritten letter. Goebbels signed his reply 'At your undeviating and loyal service.'⁵⁰ The German Newsreel Company's gift to him was a private half-hour feature showing the Goebbels family—the children reciting poetry, riding ponies, chasing a squealing piglet, and greeting their mother or Rommel as their respective limousines drive up. Helga, ten years old now, with finely molded features and braided hair, was more ladylike than ever.⁵¹ 'I want just two children when I marry,' she once emphasized. 'Otherwise I won't have a moment to call my own!'⁵² Their mother, Magda, was now something of a virago. Most of her earlier femininity had passed to her five daughters—and to Hellmut too. The newsreel camera found him in the classroom of the village school, flunking the answer to a teacher's catch question about mathematics and offering a goofy smile through protruding upper teeth—the only thing he had inherited from his absentee father, who barely featured in the film himself.

By that time, the late autumn of 1942, Hitler's calculus was also going wrong. His armies faced a stalemate in the Caucasus and perhaps even defeat in Stalingrad. Stalingrad became a matter of personal prestige between Germany's Führer and the Soviet leader after whom it had been named.⁵³ The morale reports from all Goebbels' sources brought mounting evidence of public disquiet.⁵⁴ People were openly wondering if Stalingrad was to become a second Verdun. In private, speaking to Major Martin, the minister criticized Hitler's strategic decisions as increasingly unrealistic.⁵⁵ With the sudden and unexpected collapse of Rommel's front at El Alamein, Goebbels' own private nightmare began. To the chronic pessimist Hans Fritzsche, returning from a tour of duty on the Stalingrad front, Goebbels admitted, 'You were right.'⁵⁶

He betrayed none of this in public. Speaking on October 21 he scoffed, 'One cannot prosecute a war without iron, oil, or wheat' (Stalin had now lost both the Donetsk basin and the Ukraine).⁵⁷ Challenging the enemy's insidious theme that Hitler had lost the race because the Americans would shortly intervene he published in *Das Reich* an article entitled,

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'For whom is time working?'⁵⁸ He set up a special unit to start a whispering campaign about 'miracle weapons,' both real and imaginary.⁵⁹ He felt it necessary to warn all his senior staff not to display pessimism about the future.⁶⁰ But each passing week augmented the grounds for pessimism. On the night of November 6 the B.B.C. announced a British victory at El Alamein and the capture of twenty thousand Axis troops, most of them Italians. Goebbels' machinery lapsed into silence.⁶¹ At his eleven o'clock conference on the seventh he suggested that they describe events at Alamein as 'fighting' rather than a 'battle.' With pursed lips he then announced, 'Three large British convoys have left Gibraltar. This fact is a military secret and is to be treated as such.'⁶²

The Abwehr, Germany's military Intelligence service, could offer no clue where these convoys were headed.⁶³ Goebbels feared they were bound for southern France or Italy itself.⁶⁴ But as Goebbels set out for the Munich anniversary of the 1923 putsch he heard that the Allied warships were landing tens of thousands of troops in French Morocco and Algeria. At the Brown House in Munich Hitler phoned Paris, Vichy, and Rome; he secretly invited Vichy France to join the war on his side. But as he began his speech at the beerhall he still had no reply.⁶⁵

Though still flayed by over-confident predictions about Stalingrad, it was otherwise a good speech. 'There was a time,' Goebbels heard him say, 'when the Germans laid down their weapons at a quarter to twelve. I never, ever, stop until five past.' His biting witticisms about the 'perfumed dandy' Anthony Eden delighted Goebbels, as did his sinister reference to his 1939 prophecy about the Jews. 'Of those who laughed then,' Hitler mocked, 'countless already laugh no longer today.' Then he boasted that Stalingrad was as good as Germany's: 'That was what I wanted to capture, and, do you know—modest that we are—we've got it, too! There are only a few more tiny pockets!'

Back at the Brown House afterward he told Goebbels that the French were unlikely to join the German cause. The Allies would certainly not hesitate to do what he had refrained from in 1940, namely bombing Paris. Sure enough, the Vichy French admiral in Algeria, Jean-François Darlan, asked the Americans for an armistice. Goebbels returned to Berlin late on the ninth. At his Berlin conference the next morning he cajoled his department heads once more to keep a stiff upper lip. It was like a football match, he suggested, developing a new line of debate: The home team had been four-nil until half-time, but now suddenly the visitors had scored a goal.⁶⁶ He hoped for dramatic news from Hitler's meeting that day with Pierre Laval, the French prime minister, and directed the press to express 'warm feelings' toward France.⁶⁷ Nothing came of the meeting however and Hitler ordered his troops into the unoccupied half of France. He moved his air force straight into Tunisia, far ahead of the Allied invasion troops. By occupying this 'bastion of North Africa' he expected to gain another six months and perhaps even give Rommel another chance of victory. 'German propaganda,' admitted Goebbels on the twelfth, 'is in for a tough time. Its most importance

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principle must be to put on a resolute and confident face, to show no signs of weakness, and . . . to pull everyone together as Churchill did after Dunkirk.⁶⁸

BRITISH air-raid dead so far totaled forty-three thousand; the corresponding German figure was 10,900.⁶⁹ Preparing to turn the tables on Germany, the British government was loudly proclaiming that it was Hitler who had started the bombing of civilians.⁷⁰ In Tokyo the Japanese put captured American bomber crews on trial. Goebbels decided against encouraging the lynching of British bomber crews in Germany however; rather grotesquely, he argued that the result would be total lawlessness.⁷¹ Touring the most vulnerable cities in the west he was encouraged to find people there more phlegmatic than the S.D. reports suggested.⁷² 'The enemy,' he announced on November 17, 1942 in Wuppertal, scene of many of his earliest political memories, 'has thank God left us in no doubt as to the fate he has in store for us if we ever lose faith in victory.'

With Rommel now in retreat, Goebbels suggested that the Mediterranean was of less importance than 'the war of the lieutenant-commanders,' as he called the U-boat war. A retreat in North Africa was regrettable, he said, but not of pivotal importance. The German forces had sunk a million tons of shipping during September, 750,000 tons in October, and as much again already during November, or so he claimed. As for the British air raids, which had now resumed, he emphasized: 'Mr Churchill cannot wash his hands of the historic guilt for having started this war against innocent civilians.' He promised that the hour of retribution would come.⁷³

Two days later the Red Army crashed through the eastern front at Stalingrad, and Hitler's Sixth Army found itself fighting for its life. By November 22, 1942 it was totally surrounded, and Goebbels was facing the most challenging crisis of his career as a propagandist.

Dec 1942

47: Things have not Panned out

How much longer,' Dr Goebbels challenged his loyal press officer Schirmeister that autumn, 'do you think this war's going to last?'

'If it goes on like this,' hedged Schirmeister, 'we might end it next year.'

Goebbels looked at him expressionlessly. 'I don't know,' he murmured.¹

As Germany's fortunes declined, his own would improve. The more the skies darkened, the more the people needed reminding that the darkest hour comes before the dawn; the more Hitler immured himself in his remote HQ, the more somebody else had to take control at the center. From December 1942 Goebbels started to cultivate his fellow gauleiters, inviting them round to his ministry.² Many of them were veterans of the earliest days of the party. He saw in them an elite upon whom to fall back when the going got tougher. He was apprehensive lest any gauleiter suspect he might be trying to usurp Hitler's powers, let alone those of the roughneck Martin Bormann, their titular head; Bormann took pains to hold Goebbels and all others of superior intelligence at arm's length from his Führer.

Writing in *Das Reich* Goebbels had declared, 'Nations and mankind alike are at their strongest when fighting for survival.'³ It was to this survival instinct in the Germans that he now appealed. The British recognized the magnetism of his 'strength through fear' propaganda and tried to undermine it by attacking him, calling him the biggest, most ridiculous, and most contemptible of liars. 'Even so,' one British commentator conceded, 'he's the best political brain of the whole Nazi bunch. That's why he's got to be watched.'⁴ To defeat him they resorted to innuendoes broadcast by their Soldatensender Calais transmitter. They broadcast a lurid and wholly fictitious account of Goebbels' Christmas Eve to blacken his name. 'The chief,' noted one of Sefton Delmer's experts afterward, 'has been at the height of his form over the Christmas season.'⁵

That autumn there was a genuine attempt on Goebbels' life. In November a Dr Hans Kummerow, a technician with the Löwe radio company in Berlin, confessed to plotting to blow him up with a remote-controlled bomb which he would plant, disguised as an angler, beneath a bridge on Schwanenwerder. Schirmeister attended the trial; he told Goebbels that it had revealed a picture of a 'totally degenerate' intelligentsia. From now

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on four detectives and a police car escorted Goebbels wherever he went. At Lanke machine-gun nests were emplaced around the house.⁶ As a surprise Christmas gift Hitler sent over an armor-plated Mercedes. Goebbels called it an 'armored coffin' but the Führer gave him no choice but to use it.⁷

That Christmas was overshadowed by renewed problems with Magda's health. After another minor heart attack she was again hospitalized at the West End sanitarium. Two blood transfusions led to complications, and Goebbels recorded what were possibly genuine concerns for her life. Surrounded by their children they celebrated a cheerless wedding anniversary at her bedside. He lamented in his diary, 'It's a shame that I so seldom get to see the children.' Magda struggled out to Lanke for New Year's Eve, and Helga and Heide were allowed to stay up chattering until midnight as a treat.⁸ Then it was back to bed for their mother. Belatedly thanking police general Kurt Daluge in January 1943 for the gift of a pheasant, Magda apologized, 'I have been in a sanitarium for some weeks after a heart attack and I'm going to have to stay in for some time.'⁹

The plight of the Sixth Army in Stalingrad worsened beyond relief. Broadcasting his New Year's sermon Goebbels suggested that his listeners compare their situation with that of the year before when the entire army, struggling at Moscow, had been saved by their Führer's sheer willpower alone. During the past summer they had conquered an area twice that of the British Isles, rich in raw materials, in grain, and in industry. 'Now we've got the upper hand,' he suggested. A world war was however once again upon them. 'Across all the seven seas rages the termagant of destruction,' he said, 'a vengeful goddess of history, raising her arm to smite the Anglo-Saxon powers whose ministers so recklessly and needlessly unleashed this war.' Hinting once again at the coming of a more total warfare he sprinkled his oratorical glitter across the entire German people—across the workers, intellectuals, doctors, teachers, civil servants, and even journalists. 'The continents tremble to the roar of our weaponry.' Nobody knew how long this war would last, he allowed. It might well end as suddenly as it had begun. 'Yonder,' he promised, as the last hours of the old year slipped away, 'we can already see the light.'¹⁰

Nothing could conceal however that Nazi propaganda was now on the defensive. 'It is not known to us,' his ministry cautioned in a secret directive, 'how far the Soviet resources are already exhausted.'¹¹ He forbade editors to adopt phrases coined by the enemy like 'United Nations' or even 'Allied,' since these were throwbacks to the previous world war and designed to remind the Germans subliminally that they had lost that one too.¹² Made-in-USA phrases like 'Liberty ships' and 'Flying Fortresses' were also banned, as was the phrase 'Fortress Europe.'¹³ The latter invoked, he said, the picture of a fortress under siege, complete with the implication that sooner or later it would be overrun.¹⁴ All of which did not prevent him, from time to time, using the phrase 'Fortress Europe' himself.¹⁵

He was not yet worried by the Americans. Before returning to Rom-

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mel's staff in May 1942 Berndt had suggested they draw upon the occult in their propaganda to the Americans. 'Time for Nostradamus once again,' agreed Goebbels.¹⁶ Gienanth, his former press attaché in Washington, sat in on some interrogations of American bomber crews and told Goebbels afterward that they were in a state of shock, weeping with home-sickness and 'ready to carry out any unpatriotic act.' The British were tougher, he said, but equally bereft of political ideals. 'Nearly all of them voice antisemitic remarks,' noted Goebbels optimistically, 'but more from instinct than insight.'¹⁷

ATTEMPTS at supplying the Sixth Army by air were failing. By December 1942 rumors of a Stalingrad crisis were sweeping the country. 'Things have not panned out as we expected,' Goebbels dictated to his diary on the eighteenth. 'It doesn't seem to be as easy to force open the enemy ring round Stalingrad as some of us had thought.'¹⁸ The High Command ordered a news blackout. The army ordered its radio commentator to purvey only optimism.¹⁹

Some fundamental decisions were called for. Hitler's HQ slowly bestirred itself. Late in December Martin Bormann finally visited Dr Goebbels to canvass his ideas on total war. Goebbels had been developing these ideas for almost two years. He had published an article about 'total war' in *Das Reich* on February 17, 1941. 'The German people,' he had written in his diary six months later, 'has a right to a socialist war.'²⁰ A year later he was convinced that Stalin was squeezing more than Hitler was out of his people. 'A nation that endeavors to fight such a total war,' he had dictated in September 1942, 'has exceptionally dangerous powers of resistance.'²¹ Reporting back from the eastern front later that month his friend and adviser Major Titel spoke of the outrage that 'certain abuses' at home were causing among the troops.²² Goebbels thereupon put his ideas for 'radicalizing and totalizing' the war to Walther Hewel, Julius Schaub, Alwin-Broder Albrecht, and other long-standing members of Hitler's personal entourage.²³ If it had worked for Stalin, he argued, then how much better were the prospects in Germany, where there was so much more slack waiting to be taken up. But, while he himself lived a most ascetic existence, those around him did not. Hans Fritzsche for instance was among the elite who liked to indulge in oysters, real coffee, and fine wines at Otto Horcher's gourmet restaurant in Berlin.²⁴

Britain had introduced compulsory labor service for women in March; Goebbels had long believed that at least women without families aged up to fifty should work, regardless of their social standing.²⁵ In December 1942 he stated this to Hitler and added that school-age boys and girls could help man the anti-aircraft guns.²⁶ But Hitler had complex biological arguments against it, and others close to him like Göring and the manpower commissioner Fritz Sauckel assured him that such crisis measures were not called for.

Goebbels worked hard to promote his belief in total war. In each offensive, he argued, they had lacked the ten percent that mattered. He

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discussed it separately with Speer, Funk, and Krosigk, but petty jealousies still smoldered between them as well as between Göring, Lammers, and Bormann; each of them had spent years establishing his own power base, and none would willingly cede territory.²⁷ Speer agreed on the malady. 'In every offensive,' he said to the central planners, 'we lack just ten percent.' He warned of a coming war of attrition if they could not manage that extra effort. 'I spoke with Goebbels recently,' he continued. 'He holds the view that the public is actually waiting to be called upon to make this last supreme effort.'²⁸ In 1944 however Speer would become one of the most trenchant opponents of Goebbels' total war.

Pride as much as prejudice constrained Hitler from agreeing to total war. Not until the Sixth Army's position in Stalingrad seemed desperate as it was now did he send Bormann to Goebbels' mansion at Lanke on December 28 to explore with him, as Bormann jotted in his pocket notebook, 'a total effort by the German people to increase its war potential.'²⁹ Bormann flattered Goebbels cleverly, calling him the 'harbinger' of total war and speaking of their Führer's faith in him.³⁰ The proposals which Goebbels outlined for releasing manpower to war industry and the forces did not however commend themselves to Bormann: They were rooted in his fiery socialist adolescence; he wanted punitive sacrifices by the 'upper ten thousand' who still acted as though there were no war. 'I am glad,' the minister remarked afterward at dinner, 'that I have always lived in frugal wartime style.'³¹ Despite Bormann's misgivings, Goebbels set to at once, drawing up a plan for all-out war. 'I see my main task in the weeks ahead,' he dictated at Lanke three days after Bormann's visit, 'as being to radicalize our internal management of the war so that there can be no more talk of sparing the home front and spoiling the war.'³² He closed the next day's entry, the first of 1943, with this philosophy: 'The radical and most total war is the shortest.'³³

For several days after submitting his proposals he heard nothing. He pressed the Wolf's Lair daily for a decision. Bormann urged Goebbels to be patient, pleading that it was not so simple to draft new regulations. The minister's staff drew up a more detailed outline plan: It included the introduction of labor service for women, cutbacks in the manufacture of consumer goods, the closure of department stores, and the release of two-thirds of all streetcar and railroad conductors. Dr Lammers, the Reich's top civil servant, agreed to call a Cabinet-level conference on January 7. 'I am today firmly convinced,' Goebbels recorded, 'that if we give it all we've got we'll smash the Soviet Union this coming summer.'³⁴ As he understood it, the idea was that, after Lammers had put their finished plan to Hitler, a triumvirate would implement it with dictatorial powers delegated to them by their over-burdened Führer.³⁵ The three he had in mind were himself, Lammers, and Bormann. Göring, as president of the defense committee and chief of the Four-Year Plan, had far too much on his plate already. Not that Goebbels gainsaid Göring's authority—in fact he would draft a fulsome letter to him on his fiftieth birthday a few days hence.³⁶

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